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FEATURES, PAGE 13



THE INDEPENDENT

Monday 8 June 1998 45p (IR 50p) No 3,631

Blair warns police chiefs over crime

By Fran Abrams and Kathy Marks

LABOUR is pushing ahead with a controversial policy of "zero-tolerance" policing despite strong reservations among chief constables, a leaked internal party document reveals.

The paper, drawn up by Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, and approved by the Prime Minister, asks what level of support and resources should be devoted to the operation of the programmes.

Although Mr Straw and Tony Blair have both taken a strong line on cutting crime, particularly the kind which blights many housing estates, zero tolerance has not before been adopted as official policy.

It demands that police confront people who drop litter or spit in the street, to reinforce the message that even the smallest crime will not be tolerated.

Labour's policy document on crime and justice was drawn up by a commission chaired by Mr Straw and approved by Labour's Joint Policy Committee, chaired by Mr Blair.

It marks the first stage of a policy-making process which will set out the party's anti-crime stance for the next general election. It says: "All too often it has been people living in the most deprived areas who have been the most victimised. High levels of crime and disorder have been compounded by poverty. We require policies with a greater degree of social intervention to create the co-

ditions in which local people are empowered to regain control of their neighbourhoods," it says.

Although the document does not go into detail about how Labour plans to take forward this type of policing, it appears to assume that it will do so. "What level of support and resources should be devoted to the operation of zero-tolerance policing?" it asks.

In Cleveland, the policy of constant vigilance against even the most minor crimes led to a 26 per cent drop in crime in 10 months after its introduction in 1996. However, it also coincided with a six-fold increase in civil claims against the police over a six-year period, from 27 in 1990 to 162 in 1996.

The number of stop-and-searches of suspects in the street quadrupled, and the Cleveland force used CS gas more than any other in Britain.

The same methods were used successfully in New York, though the city had 7,000 extra police officers to execute it.

The Cleveland force's approach hit the headlines last December when its creator, Ray Mallon, was suspended on suspicion of suppressing information about two detectives accused of giving drugs to prisoners in return for information.

Neighbouring forces made it clear they would have nothing to do with zero tolerance. Frank Taylor, Chief Constable of Durham, said he had a better crime-fighting record than Cleveland, as did Northumbria. Last night, the Association

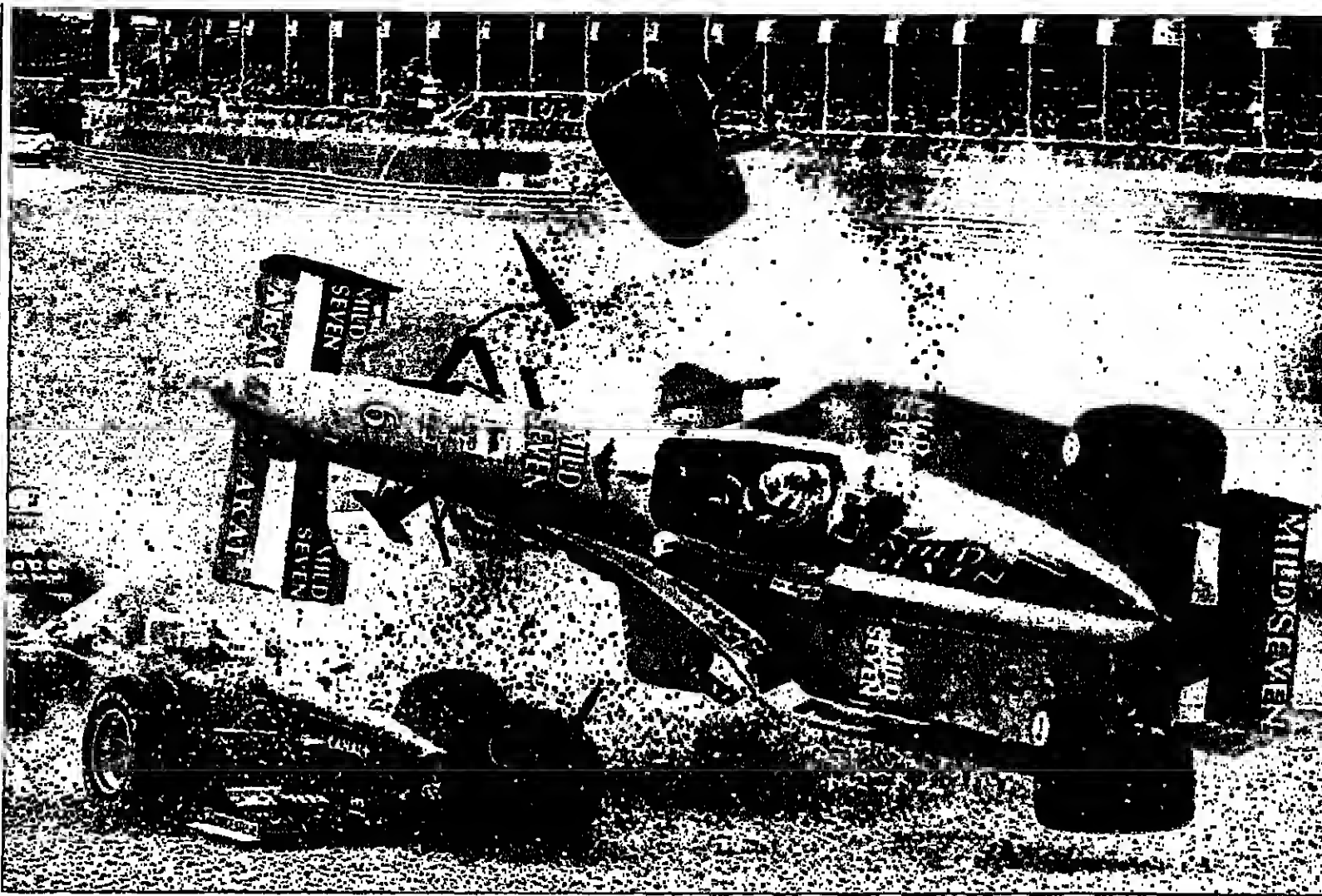
of Chief Police Officers said it was up to individual forces to decide whether to use the methods. But in a statement, it said that unless there was extra money, the policy could lead to resources being diverted from tackling more serious crimes.

"It would be wrong and dangerous to deal solely with the symptoms of any social breakdown without seeking to redress its causes," the association said.

Alan Beith, Liberal Democrat home affairs spokesman, said the policy could encourage police to behave intolerantly. "As a catchphrase I think it is a dangerous one. Zero tolerance implies not only that you don't tolerate crime but that the whole of law and order is geared to making people conform."

A Home Office spokeswoman said that while the Government's Crime and Disorder Bill did not specifically mention zero-tolerance policing, some of the measures it contained were in a similar spirit. In particular, anti-social behaviour orders and child curfews were introduced in that vein, she said.

Further fears will be raised by figures published in today's *Independent* which show that police stopped and searched 4.5 black people and 1.3 Asians for every white person, proportionate to population. An unpublished report commissioned by Scotland Yard showed that only one search in 10 led to an arrest, implying that the vast majority were unnecessary. Stop and search, page 4



Austrian driver Alexander Wurz comes to grief in yesterday's Canadian Grand Prix. Wurz was unhurt and the race restarted. Photograph: Reuters

India blamed for train bomb

By Peter Popham in New Delhi

SOON after the Khyber mail train pulled out of Khairpur in Pakistan yesterday, on its long journey to the north-west frontier town of Peshawar, a time bomb exploded in a crowded second-class coach, killing at least 23 people and injuring 75.

It was the latest and by far the most murderous act of terrorism in the past few days, all of them blamed by Pakistan's government on Raw, the Research & Analysis Wing of India's secret service.

India has ridiculed the allegations, but tensions between the world's two newest nuclear weapons states have risen to dangerous new levels. India is now braced for acts of Pakistani terrorism in return.

A proxy terrorism war may be on the verge of turning into something far worse. The Pakistani foreign minister, Ghous Ayub Khan, and Atal Vajpayee, who is both Prime Minister and foreign minister of India, have been trading words of peace over the past week.

Tensions between these two deadly enemies, which appeared to be on the wane dur-

ing the statesmanlike premiership of Inder Gujral, rose markedly with the election victory in February of the avowedly anti-Pakistani BJP. Now the threats and menaces that have been traded since India's nuclear test at Pokharan on 11 May appear to make further escalation inevitable.

The proxy war between India and Pakistan broke out in Kashmir in 1989 and has been going on ever since. Now it has flared up again - or at least that is how the Pakistani government is explaining the seemingly random bomb attacks that have struck Pakistan in the past few

days. And if the string of bombings precipitates tit-for-tat violence in India, the proxy war will be back in earnest.

Within hours of yesterday's train explosion, Pakistan's minister of information, Musashid Hussain, accused India of starting a terrorist campaign on Pakistani soil. "It is the latest in a series of attacks," he told the BBC, "an attempt to destabilise Pakistan following the nuclear tests". He claimed that after an

earlier time bomb went off on Saturday - this one in a cinema in Lahore which killed three people - an Indian national had been arrested and had admitted being involved.

Although Mr Hussain's claim that he had "unimpeachable" evidence of Indian involvement in the bombings was treated sceptically, many such bombings in both countries have been attributed to the proxy war during the past nine years.

Smith takes on Murdoch's Sky TV

By Anthony Bevins Political Editor

RUPERT MURDOCH, one of the most powerful media moguls in the land, and a chum of the Prime Minister, is being threatened by one of Tony Blair's Cabinet Ministers.

Chris Smith, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, has told the European Commission that much of the output of Mr Murdoch's Sky TV channels do not meet Brussels directives on the quality of television output and could risk losing their licences.

Under a 1989 directive,

"Television without Frontiers", EU states are required to ensure "where practicable and by appropriate means, that broadcasters reserve a majority of their broadcasting time for European works."

At least one tenth of output is also supposed to come from independent European producers, and an adequate proportion should be retransmitted within five years of their production - in an effort to stamp out excessive repeats of golden oldies.

Government analysis of the UK output from 80 television channels shows that more than

two thirds of BBC output for 1995 and 1996 was European, while about a fifth came from independent European producers, with a similar proportion recent independent work.

By comparison, Sky One, the basic Murdoch satellite channel, delivered a European output of only 33 per cent in 1995, with 38 per cent in 1996. Its independent productions and recent independent productions hit the 10 per cent target in 1995, but then fell back to 4 per cent in 1996.

In 1996, none of the Sky Channels reached the majority European output demanded

by the directive. By the end of last year, Sky One (45 per cent), Sky Travel (34 per cent), Sky Movies 1 (23 per cent) and Sky Movies Gold (20 per cent) were still well below the Brussels benchmark.

In a letter to MPs, Mr Smith said: "From now on, broadcasters' quarterly data returns will be examined cumulatively."

He also added the threat: "If a broadcaster fails to come up with a convincing explanation of its inability to meet fully quota requirements, the Government would be prepared to use the powers under

Section 188 of the Broadcasting Act 1990, which provides a statutory mechanism to enforce the requirements through the regulatory system." The big-stick mechanism was not detailed.

However, the European Commission has been told by Mr Smith's department: "Where quotas have not been met and no reasonable justification has been given, the authorities may use Section 188 of the Broadcasting Act 1990, which provides for a range of penalties right up to withdrawal of the licence."

Tom Sutcliffe, page 15

Today's news

Risk to students

SIX out of 10 students currently sitting A-levels will fail to reach their potential because "unscrupulous" employers are forcing them to work long hours outside school, the Government has been told. Page 3

Peer pressure

CONSERVATIVE peers have threatened to disrupt the government's legislative programme in order to block House of Lords reform, which includes abolishing the voting rights of hereditary peers. The appointment of around 600 life peers for an "interim" second chamber will be announced today. Page 6

Kosovo call

SOLDIERS of Kosovo's rebel army appealed yesterday for more ethnic Albanians to join them and "fight for freedom" against Serbian forces waging a fierce offensive against them. The appeal follows the Serbs' latest campaign, which reportedly continued with more shelling in Kosovo. Page 9

Cruise ship sails into a kidnap carry-on

By James Roberts

WHEN the 517 Russian and Ukrainian passengers on board the Tiras Shevchenko set sail from Odessa on 30 May for a three-week Mediterranean cruise, they were looking forward to disembarking in 12 ports in seven countries.

Exotic shopping, clubbing and encounters with interesting foreigners were all in prospect. In the end, they only saw the grand ports from the deck of their ship, and the only holiday encounters they enjoyed were with a sullen captain

and his 270-strong crew.

They knew something was wrong when they arrived in the Greek port of Piraeus, close to Athens. They reached there on Monday 1 June, but by Friday the captain still hadn't let them off the ship. Having shelled out a minimum of \$1,500 a passenger they were beginning to get a little irate.

Some even tried to board the supply barges that came up to the Tiras Shevchenko, but the captain stymied their efforts by closing off the exits from his ship.

On Saturday the passengers

sent distress signals to a Turkish coast guard boat as their ship passed through the Dardanelles, from the Aegean Sea to the Black Sea. The Turks called on the Tiras Shevchenko captain to stop but he refused, saying, somewhat unconvincingly, that everything was calm on board.

Yesterday, in international waters off Istanbul, the desperate holidaymakers threw messages in plastic bottles begging for help from their consulates to journalists who approached the ship in small boats. "These people have

stolen our money. We want our money back," shouted several passengers as they held huge banners reading "S.O.S. Help".

But the pleas fell on deaf ears. Consular officials from Ukraine, Russia and Azerbaijan did indeed visit the ship, but simply called on the passengers to maintain order.

"We were supposed to go to 12 ports and we did not," said Odessa TV producer Vladimir Kryzhanovskiy. But soon, once the ship had restocked with food, Mr Kryzhanovskiy and everyone else on board were heading back to Odessa.

Afghan earthquake

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STARTING TOMORROW IN THE INDEPENDENT AN EXPANDED 32-PAGE NEWS SECTION

There will be more space for our powerful team of home news reporters and specialist writers; a page dedicated to parliament; a bigger foreign news section to include the very best writing from around the world; an expanded business section that has hundreds more share listings and unit trusts every day, more comment, more news and new columns; plus nine pages of sport every day to report on all the action from France 98 and the summer's big sporting events.



A NEW 24-PAGE DAILY REVIEW

This broadsheet section will be a showcase for our acclaimed team of columnists, commentators and feature writers. There will be four pages of comment and opinion, a daily law report, plus more space each day for arts, obituaries, features, listings and television. Additionally, the weekly sections on health, media, education, law, architecture and design, fashion, and information technology will be bigger and even more comprehensive.



THE INDEPENDENT
Bigger and better

Big rise in food poisoning illnesses

By Glenda Cooper
Consumer Affairs Correspondent

THE number of food-poisoning cases rose by 10 per cent last year, partly because people are ignoring food safety messages.

Notified cases of food poisoning across the UK rose to 105,552, up from 94,923 in 1996. Although the reported rate fell slightly in Scotland, the number of cases increased in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

While many people suffer only mild cases of food poisoning, more serious are bacteria such as *E. coli* O157, which was the cause of the world's worst food-poisoning outbreak when 19 people died in 1996 in Scotland.

The reasons for the rise – announced at the start of Food Safety Week – are varied. "Basically it's been rising year-on-year for 15 years," said a Food and Drink Federation spokesman.

"It could be that more people are reporting cases of food poisoning because of greater awareness, but it may also be that people are going to the supermarket less regularly and people are careless about keeping food too long.

Research shows that many food safety messages are being ignored. One in ten people do not keep raw meat separate from other foods and half do not follow storage times advice.

Nearly four in five only change or wash their dishcloths once a month and one in four do not always wash their hands before preparing food.

Half do not always use separate chopping boards for cooked and raw foods and 14 per cent do not always cook meat products thoroughly.

"With a growing trend in once-a-week visits to the supermarket, awareness of food storage and food hygiene practice within the home is increasingly important," said Michael MacKenzie, director general of the Food and Drink Federation.

"The House of Commons' Agriculture Committee this year reported that the great majority of food-poisoning cases occur in the home."

Employers say that 23 million working days are lost annually through mild forms of food poisoning, and the cost to the nation has been estimated in excess of £1,000m a year.

Health advisers say there are a number of important recommendations that people should follow if they wish to minimise the risk of food poisoning: keep raw and cooked foods apart; keep kitchens clean; wash hands properly before and after touching food; control temperatures and avoid waiting times between cooking preparation and eating.

The Federation will be taking the message into supermarkets, schools and nurseries throughout this week.

The UK food and drink manufacturing sector now employs about 500,000 people – more than one in 10 of the total workforce. It is the single largest manufacturing sector, accounting for almost one quarter of total purchases by UK consumers.



Linda Watson and her daughter Amanda London-Williams with their solicitor Jeff Hide

Photograph: Nigel Bowles

Murder charge dropped against mother and daughter

By Andrew Buncombe

A FORMER beauty queen accused of murdering her multi-millionaire husband with the help of her daughter will not face trial, it was revealed last night.

Linda Watson and her daughter Amanda London-Williams will today be formally told in court that charges against them have been dropped.

The pair, who have been on bail for the last year, learnt of the extraordinary development last Friday, just days before they were to be tried at the Old Bailey for the murder of company director Richard Watson.

Mr Watson, 55, who owned a computer firm, was shot dead as he climbed out of his sports car at his luxury home in East

Grinstead, East Sussex, in December 1996. The women were both inside the house at the time of the shooting.

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) confirmed last night they will be dropping charges because of lack of evidence. Sussex Police last night declined to comment on whether they had reopened their investigation into the murder.

Last night Mrs Watson, 42, who was the dead man's third wife, and her daughter were lying low as they prepared for this morning's hearing. Ms London-Williams' solicitor, Jeff Hide, said both women were grateful for the decision.

"I would not say they are relieved because they have always maintained their complete innocence. They are amazed that the matter has even got to this



Richard Watson: Shot dead outside his luxury home

stage," he said. "There is not a scrap of evidence against either of them," he added.

Mr Hide has been working on the women's defence since they were charged with the murder in July 1997. He has amassed a huge amount of evidence which he will present to the police, indicating possible alternative lines of inquiry.

It is understood some of the evidence will suggest Mr Watson was working for MI6, informally passing on information he gathered from business trips in eastern Europe. He was also believed to be working on other multi-million pound deals, not involving computers, shortly before his death. Both factors may have been relevant to his death.

It will also be revealed that less than a month before Mr Watson was murdered – shot by 12 shotgun blasts – he had been attacked by two men armed with a stun-gun.

Widdecombe launches attack on gays and single parents

By Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

GAY and single parent households are inferior to the traditional family unit, the new Shadow Health Secretary, Ann Widdecombe, claimed last night.

Miss Widdecombe, who was promoted to the health brief by William Hague last week, said in a radio interview that the two-parent heterosexual family

should remain society's "preferred model".

Asked if she agreed with the former Defence Secretary, Michael Portillo, that the Tory party should open its arms to gays and single mothers, she told BBC Radio 4's *The Westminster Hour*: "I certainly don't think that those sorts of lifestyle have equal validity with that of the traditional family."

"That is not to say that they

should not be tolerated. I don't think you can allow every lifestyle – just because you tolerate it – equal validity with what should be a preferred model."

Miss Widdecombe, a convert to Catholicism, also restated her opposition to abortion.

Asked if she would be comfortable being responsible for the administration of abortions as a potential future health

secretary, she replied: "But just a minute, I am not the health secretary. I am the shadow health secretary. Indeed you are right, I would never license an abortion clinic but that is not a problem I face."

"I think it is very serious when we actually have abortions done just because the babies will be ugly, when we have babies routinely aborted for hair lip or club foot. I think that is a very,

very sad reflection on society."

In a newspaper article last month, she wrote: "One of the sundry horrors for which this Government is likely to be remembered will be that it gave its imprimatur to sodomy at 16."

The House of Commons is expected to vote later this month to lower the age of consent for gay men to 16.

"They will clothe the whole revolting business with the po-

litically correct jargon of equal rights and the need to respect the sexual orientation of the individual," Miss Widdecombe wrote.

A Labour spokeswoman said last night: "In October Michael Portillo said the Tories had suffered in government from a reputation of being too intolerant. Ann Widdecombe's comments today show they have learned absolutely nothing."

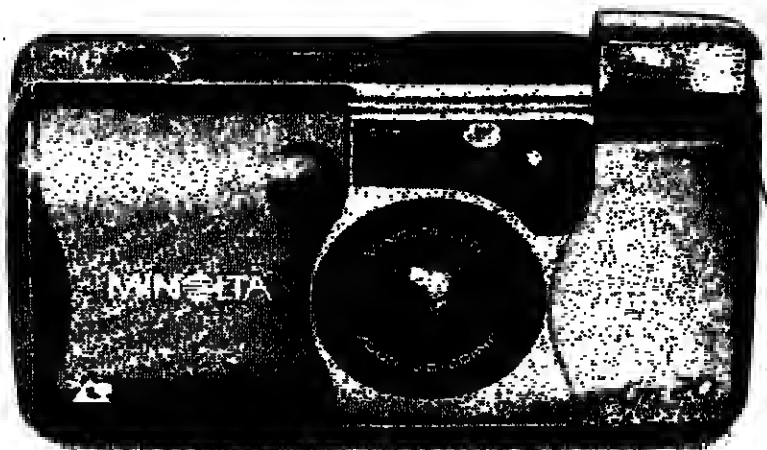


Recycled paper made up 41.4% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the first half of 1997.

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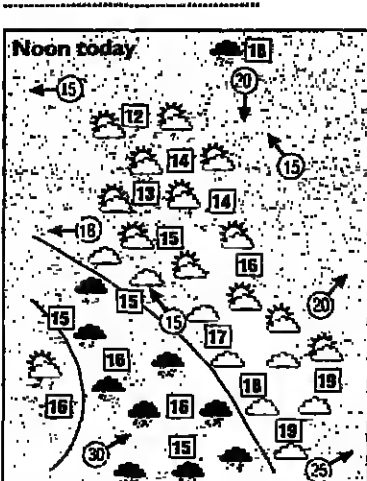
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WEATHER



Central and northern Scotland will have a cool, bright day with sunny spells and showers, but southern Scotland and north and eastern England will cloud over later this morning with rain spreading from the south-west during the afternoon. Northern Ireland, Wales and south-west England will be wet for much of the day, but it should clear up towards evening. Rather windy especially around south-western coasts, and afternoon temperatures should be near the seasonal normal.

Outlook for the next few days
During Tuesday and Wednesday, more rain will cross the country at intervals, any brighter intervals will be rather limited, and most areas are expected to remain rather cool with a blustery wind. On Thursday and Friday a very cool northerly airflow will set in, bringing showers and bright intervals to much of the UK. Some of these showers could be heavy and thundery, especially in East Angles and South-east England.

British Isles weather

Most recent available figures at noon local time

	Cloudy	Clear	Partly	Light	Heavy	Thunder
Belfast	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61
Birmingham	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61
Blackpool	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61
Bournemouth	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61
Brighton	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61
Bristol	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61
Cardiff	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61
Cardle	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61
Canterbury	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61
Dublin	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61
Edinburgh	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61
Exeter	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61
Glasgow	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61

Air quality

Yesterday's readings

	Mod	Mod/High	Good	Good
London	Good	Good	Good	Good
London	Good	Good	Good	Good
London	Good	Good	Good	Good
London	Good	Good	Good	Good
London	Good	Good	Good	Good

Out and about with AA Roadwatch

Call 0336 401777 for the latest local and national traffic news. Source: The Automobile Association. Calls charged at 50p per min at all times (inc VAT)

	Mod	Mod/High	Good	Good
London	Good	Good	Good	Good
London	Good	Good	Good	Good
London	Good	Good	Good	Good
London	Good	Good	Good	Good
London	Good	Good	Good	Good

World weather

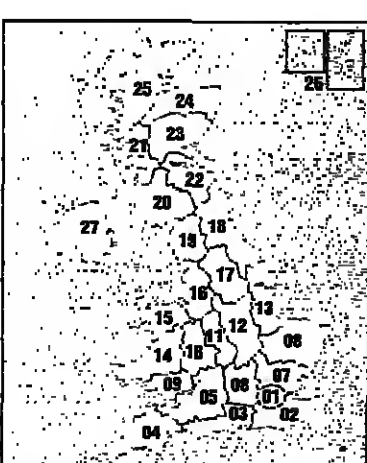
Most recent available figures at noon local time

	Cloudy	Clear	Partly	Light	Heavy	Thunder
Abuja	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61
Abuja	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61
Abuja	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61
Abuja	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61
Abuja	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61	16.61

Atlantic chart, noon today

Warm front, Cold front, Occluded front

	Mod	Mod/High	Good	Good
London	Good	Good	Good	Good
London	Good	Good	Good	Good
London	Good	Good	Good	Good
London	Good	Good	Good	Good
London	Good	Good	Good	Good



High tides

	AM	HT	PM	HT
Belfast	11:29	6.4	13:49	6.7
Birmingham	11:01	6.5	23:20	8.8
Bournemouth	06:48	11.9	19:11	12.2
Brighton	06:06	7.9	18:23	8.0
Bristol	12:23	2.9	00:59	3.1
Brighton	11:29	3.6	23:42	3.7

Lighting-up times

	Mod	Mod/High	Good	Good
Belfast	21:56	04:49	Sun rises	04:45
Birmingham	21:27	04:46	Sun sets	21:15
Brighton	21:24	04:54	Moon rises	19:17
Bournemouth	21:59	04:33	Moon sets	04:12
Brighton	21:15	04:44	Full Moon	June 10
Brighton	21:35	04:41		
Brighton	21:42	04:29		

MICHAEL HANLON WEATHER WISE

DRUG traffickers, of all people, are being blamed for the bizarre clouds of smoke and fumes that have been blanketing much of Texas in the past week. The smoke has reduced visibility to as little as three miles in some areas. People have been warned to stay indoors as much as possible, and the elderly and children are thought to be particularly at risk from respiratory problems triggered by the toxic haze.

The smoke is an unwelcome visitor from south of the Rio Grande and from across the Gulf of Mexico. Fires have destroyed more than a million acres of vegetation in drought-stricken Mexico and Central America this year. Some have been caused naturally, but many are being blamed on farmers clearing the land, and on drug traffickers intent on diverting state resources away from drug-detection and into firefighting operations.

We in Britain are spared from such horrors, but that has not always been the case. Right up to the 1960s coal-fired power stations and factories, as well as millions of domestic coal fires in the middle of our cities helped to produce smoky fogs that are almost unimaginable today.

In London, between 5 December and 8 December 1952, the visibility was so bad that movement on foot was impossible, and in the Isle of Dogs, according to *The Weather of Britain*, the bible of weather lore by Robin Striding, it was reported that people lost sight of their own feet, and blowing your nose left a black mark on the handkerchief for some days.

Such pea-soupers are now rare. The last coal-fired power station in London, Battersea, closed 18 years ago and it is illegal in many conurbations to burn raw coal in domestic fires. Sadly, the increase in traffic is helping to push air quality down again.

هذا من الامام

It's the Sunday before exams. Should pupils be packing supermarket shelves or revising?



By Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

SIX out of 10 students at present sitting A-levels will fail to reach their potential because they are working long hours outside school, the Government has been told.

Some 17- and 18-year-olds are under pressure, it is alleged, to work up to 30 hours a week for leading stores, fast-food and hotel chains.

The accusations come from a senior teacher in a selective girls' school in the South-east of England, but head teachers across the country are increasingly angry over the extent of term-time work.

In a letter to Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, Charlotte Davies, Deputy Head of Wallington High School for Girls in Surrey, indicated that if her highly academic institution was suffering, "then so is every school".

David Hart, leader of the National Association of Head Teachers, said "there is no question that it is a genuine problem. A significant number of sixth formers are working excessive hours and it is damaging their prospects."

Ms Davies said teachers "regularly experience problems" with students working at Marks & Spencer, Asda, Tesco, Waitrose, Sainsbury, the Hilton Hotel, Shoppers' stores, McDonald's and others.

As part of a submission to Mrs Beckett over the implementation of a European Union directive on working time and the protection of young people, Ms Davies says some A-level pupils have been pressured into working until 3am at a hotel, and 4am stock-taking in a shop.

Supermarkets and at least one hotel chain have asked students for their school timetable, so they can call them into work during the day, it is claimed.

Some 16- to 18-year-olds, who are not covered by legal re-

strictions on hours of employment, can find themselves working 70 hours a week, if their school work is included.

Ms Davies points out that the European Union's "Social Chapter" aims for a maximum adult working week of 48 hours and argues that "minors" deserved the same level of protection.

Raj Jethwa of the young members' section of the GMB general workers' union, which supports Ms Davies, wants guidelines to be issued to employers and schools limiting paid work to eight hours a week.

Evidence from around the country showed students cleaning a school for two hours a night, five nights a week, who said they were "permanently exhausted". Some pupils working in hotels and supermarkets felt compelled to work 20 or even 30 hours a week.

The Government was partly at fault because of a "very clear message" that it was important to be independent and to earn your own living, Ms Davies said in her submission. A spokeswoman for Marks & Spencer said the company worked very closely with schools all over the country. "Not only do we employ children of school age, but Marks & Spencer staff go into schools to talk about the world of work and help pupils with their projects," she said.

Asda said school children were encouraged to reduce their working hours during examinations and they were able to swap shifts with other staff to fit in with school commitments.

Doug McAvoy, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said employers had an interest in young people gaining the best qualifications they could achieve.

"If they put pressure on them to work longer hours when they should be studying it will not benefit employers in the long term."



Tamsin Luff, 18, has worked as a waitress while studying for her A Levels, while others (above left) have spent up to 30 hours a week in supermarkets. Main photograph: Neville Elder

Working it out – the struggle to balance a job and homework

By Andrew Buncombe

SPARE a thought this morning for Tamsin Luff, who will sit in the sixth form block at Ashlyns School in Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, taking her chemistry A-level.

She has been working hard for the four A-levels she is taking this summer and last night she was busy with some final revision. But on Saturday the teenager spent 10 hours working as a waitress and serving behind the bar at a wedding.

Tamsin, 18, is one of a growing number of students study-

ing for A-levels and other qualifications who are taking on part-time jobs to provide often crucial money to help them through their studies at college or sixth form. Tamsin can earn up to £40 or £50 a week.

"Fortunately my employers are very flexible and they will ring up each week and ask how much I want to work," she said. "Some weeks I might do two or three nights but some weeks I will not do anything."

"At the moment the work does not get in the way of my studies but I think it would be very different if I was working

in a supermarket or something like that.

"I think that might be quite difficult. I also have horses and

Yesterday, in Kensington High Street, west London, one of Britain's busiest streets for Sunday shopping, scores of stu-

The students always complain that they don't have enough time to fit it all in'

they take up a lot of my time. In between them, school and work, there is not a lot of spare time. I think I would struggle if my hours were not so flexible."

dents were dealing with the constant juggle of work and studies. "We have loads and loads of students working in here at weekends," said an assistant in

Marks & Spencer. "They are always complaining that they don't have enough time to fit all their work in."

"I am studying for a degree at university so it's not so bad but I think it must be quite difficult for them if they are studying for A-levels and having to work here. I would not have been able to fit it all in."

Not everyone agreed. Across the road at McDonald's an 18-year-old college student was wiping down a table top with something approaching religious zeal.

"I am studying a series of

subjects at college in north London and I have plenty of time for them," she said. "But I have some friends who have jobs which do not allow them enough time to study. I guess it depends mainly on the job they have."

Some of the larger stores appear to realise that many of their younger employees have to devote a lot of time to studying.

"We are flexible. We ask people how much they are able to work and then we fit them in," said a source at Safeway, the supermarket. "We have lots of students working here and we don't have any problems."

ITV chases Paxman to wear news crown

By Janine Gibson
Media Correspondent

IT may sound like an unlikely battle, but the ITV network is apparently torn between Trevor MacDonald and Jeremy Paxman to present its new flagship current affairs show.

Newsnight presenter Paxman has emerged as the leading contender to rival the "dream team" pairing of the News at Ten anchor and Channel Five's star news presenter, Kirsty Young.

ITV is currently considering a new £10m weekly current affairs flagship programme which will begin in the autumn. Bids are under consideration although a decision has not yet been made.

ITV Director of Programmes, David Liddiment and Head of News and Current Affairs, Steve Anderson, will make the final decision on who they want to present the new series.

Anderson had previously warned the bidders early in the process not to sign expensive deals with presenters, saying the network would decide on the front-of-camera line-up.

However, bidders were asked to give an indication of the presenters they would prefer.

Mr MacDonald and Ms Young have been nominated by at least two bidders.

Mr Paxman is believed to have been put forward by Granada Television.

An ITV source said: "It's a battle between what ITV is



Jeremy Paxman (above) and Trevor MacDonald



and what it wants to be. Jeremy Paxman has got current affairs credibility, but Trevor MacDonald is incredibly popular with the viewers."

If Paxman is favoured by ITV, it may mean a battle with

the BBC which will be loath to lose its high-profile interviewer. Although Paxman has always been a controversial BBC figure and frequently criticised by politicians for perceived bias or unfair questioning, he is acknowledged to be one of the country's finest inquirers. Last month he won the Royal Television Society Award for his interviewing skills.

Six companies presented their bids to an ITV network committee last month.

After two were ruled out, Liddiment and Anderson wrote to the remaining shortlist of four asking for further details of how their programmes would be put together.

They were asked to supply more specific financial information about budgets and to explain how they would increase the "news reactors" element of the show.

There are four bids still in the running for the coveted series, would could replace News at Ten in the 10pm slot if ITV decides to move the news.

Granada Television or United News and Media, in partnership with independent Mentor Barraclough Carey are the favourites, Carlton Television or Independent Twenty-Two Television are still in with a chance.

A Granada source yesterday confirmed that Mr Paxman has been mentioned as part of its bid to produce a programme, but a spokesman would not comment on the details of the application.

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Blacks are 'targeted for police searches'

By Kathy Marks

BLACK people are more than four times more likely than whites to be stopped and searched in the street by police, according to an unpublished report commissioned by Scotland Yard.

The report confirms long-held suspicions that this method of policing is used disproportionately against the black population in London. It also finds that the number of stop-and-searches has risen tenfold in the past decade, but that nearly 90 per cent of people stopped are law-abiding citizens.

The research was conducted by a working group with representatives from the Metropolitan Police, the Home Office, the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), and the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders. But although a draft report was produced more than a year ago, it has yet to be published.

The draft, which has been seen by *The Independent*, makes wide-ranging recommendations aimed at allaying public concern. The authors say that while they could not draw firm conclusions about the effect of racist attitudes in stop-and-searches, they felt that police culture "left scope for personal prejudice and stereotyping to lead to discriminatory behaviour".

They add: "It is imperative that the use of the powers is seen to be fair. Failure to do so will continue to undermine the confidence of the police service."

Statistics collated by the working group show that the Metropolitan Police accounts for 46 per cent of the national total of stop-and-searches, and that between 1986 and 1995, the

numbers recorded in London rose from 35,260 to 300,575.

Traditionally, police stop people suspected of crimes such as carrying drugs or weapons. However, the report says that only one-tenth of searches lead to an arrest - which implies that the vast majority are unnecessary.

The figures showing over-representation of ethnic minorities - 4.5 black people and 1.3 Asians stopped for every white person, proportionate to the population - are based on police records. Home Office research suggests that the real black/white imbalance may be as high as six to one.

The working party's most controversial recommendation is that all people searched should be given a written record of the encounter, including details of why they were stopped. It also recommends that race issues should be incorporated into stop-and-search training, and that the number of stops conducted should no longer be used to assess the performance of police officers.

A spokesman for the CRE said that when the working group was set up in 1995 "it was agreed by all parties that the report, when it was concluded, would be published".

However, Scotland Yard says there are no plans to do so. Assistant Commissioner Denis O'Connor said yesterday that while the report had dealt with the issue of fairness, "it did not address the contribution that stop and search makes to community safety". He added: "Stop-and-search has a critical role to play in protecting the public by preventing and reducing crime, but we acknowledge that all sections of the public must have confidence that it is being used effectively and fairly."



Jensen sports cars will again be made in the Midlands, by Keith Rauer (left) and Robin Bowyer

Photographer: Martin Rickett

Jensen born again as sports car marque

By Kate Watson-Smyth

JENSEN, one of the most famous names in British motoring, is to be revived with the launch of a new sports car.

The firm, best known for the distinctive Jensen Interceptor, collapsed for the second time in 1992 after running into financial difficulties.

But now an engineering group, based in Redditch,

Worcester, has bought the rights to the Jensen brand and the firm is hoping to make around 500 cars a year.

The Jensen was first built in 1936 but reached its heyday in the 1960s. They were all built by hand and were one-offs.

Robin Loder, an expert on classic cars, said the Jensen was a beautiful car.

"They were even more expensive than the Aston Martin.

It was the dream car of my youth," he said.

In 1971, a Jensen cost £5,900 compared to £5,700 for an Aston Martin V8. A Jaguar E-type cost a mere £1,800.

Keith Rauer, joint managing director of Creative, the new owners of Jensen, said that designers and engineers were currently producing a prototype of the new sports model, to be produced in the Midlands.

"Work is progressing well towards the launch of what promises to be an innovative and truly British sports car.

The announcement was made at the annual gathering of the Jensen Owners' Club in Warrington, Cheshire.

Robin Bowyer, the other joint managing director of Creative, said: "Jensen has its roots in the Midlands and it's appropriate that the vehicle will

be built here again by the new Jensen Motors Limited. "We plan to launch the first vehicle towards the end of the year."

Mr Rauer and Mr Bowyer, whose working lives have been spent in the motor industry, formed Creative four years ago. Specialising in tooling for automotive development projects, the firm now employs more than 100 staff with annual sales of over £10m.

Linda McCartney given Trafalgar Square tribute

By Kate Watson-Smyth

HUNDREDS of vegetarians and animal rights campaigners are expected to congregate in central London to pay tribute to Linda McCartney tonight.

They will join Sir Paul and his family at a vigil in the former Beale's late wife in Trafal-

gar Square. In a ceremony redolent of the tributes to Diana, Princess of Wales, last summer, flowers and candles will be placed at the foot of a giant photograph of Lady McCartney while a memorial service will be held at nearby St Martin-in-the-Fields church.

Fellow former Beatles

George Harrison and Ringo Starr have also been invited to the service, which Sir Paul will attend with his children Heather, 35; Mary, 27; Stella, 26; and James, 21.

Sir Paul will pay tribute to his wife of 30 years, who died after a long battle against breast cancer at the age of 56.

He said the choir and the congregation would sing "Let It Be" but denied reports that the three remaining Beatles would reunite for the evening.

Sir Paul has helped to organise the service, which will be a celebration of her life as well as a mourning of her passing. Attendance will be by invitation

only and will reflect her love of music, family, animals, vegetarianism and photography.

Animal activists will join fans in the square outside in an event organised by Lady McCartney's friend, the television comedy writer, Carla Lane. A giant pair of Angel's wings will form the vigil centrepiece.

Tory MP toes the line on drug law

By Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

THE CONSERVATIVE health spokesman Alan Duncan has dropped a chapter calling for the legalisation of drugs from a forthcoming book, it was disclosed last night.

Mr Duncan, a close friend of the Tory leader William Hague, confirmed that his comments were being removed from a paperback version of the book which was first published three years ago.

He was said to have made the decision to drop the controversial chapter two weeks ago, before his appointment to his party's health team last week. Conservative policy is against legalisation of cannabis and other drugs.

In the book, *Saturn's Children*, Mr Duncan argued that "prohibition" was not working. The millionaire businessman and MP for Rutland and Melton ran into controversy with that section of the book, which was mainly devoted to chronicling the advance of the state in the last century.

"Universal prohibition has, perversely, increased consumption. We have to address the tragedy that prohibition is doomed to failure," he wrote.

But yesterday, after his party leader was tackled on the subject during a television interview, Mr Duncan was forced to backtrack. He would not, however, say whether his views had changed.

"I am the most anti-drugs person you will ever find, and always have been. This chapter won't reappear, and I look forward to supporting party policy in full," Mr Duncan said.

In a television interview on *Breakfast With Frost* yesterday, Mr Hague said the comments in the book were out of step with party policy and would have to be amended for publication of the paperback version.

"Clearly, if he wanted to publish that book he would have to bring it into line with the party policy," Mr Hague said.

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University offers students jab to fight meningitis

By Jeremy Laurence
Health Editor

SOUTHAMPTON University has become the first in the UK to agree routine vaccination against meningitis because of fears about the growing threat it poses to students.

The university, which last October experienced Britain's worst outbreak, with three deaths, is to offer all first-year students immunisation against meningitis C from September.

The decision is likely to trigger fierce debate in all institutions of higher education about how to deal with the disease, which attacks unpredictably, with unerring speed and ferocity. Last year in the UK 64 students were hospitalised and 15 died of meningitis C, the fastest-growing strain.

Manchester University is understood to be considering following Southampton's lead. However, advice issued by the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals last week said that routine vaccination is not recommended; most cases of meningococcal disease are caused by other strains against which there is no vaccine.

The high risk of meningitis among university students will be spelt out at a conference in London tomorrow. Professor Howard Newby, vice-chancellor

of Southampton, said: "The meningitis outbreak was the most traumatic event in our working lives. We must continue to plan for other possible incidents of meningitis and to ensure that we have done all we can to protect the university community."

At the height of the Southampton outbreak, Sir Kenneth Calman, the Government's chief medical officer, said quick diagnosis and treatment was the surest way to save lives. Vaccination provided far from perfect protection and could create a false sense of security, he warned.

Advice from the Committee of Vice-Chancellors says that all institutions should develop plans for dealing with an outbreak by raising awareness of the symptoms and establishing communication and support arrangements.

Most cases of meningitis occur in children under five but there is a second peak in the 15-19 age group. The disease is more common in students than in the non-student population of the same age group and the highest incidence is in universities with many students living in halls of residence.

The likeliest explanation is that such students are newly exposed to strains of meningococcal disease to which they do

not have natural immunity (10-25 per cent of the population are carriers with no symptoms). The close conditions in which students live, and their lifestyle, increases the chances of spread.

Existing vaccines against meningitis C provide only 40 per cent protection, and are ineffective in children under 18 months. New Group C vaccines have been tested on babies with encouraging results but it will be years before they are routinely available.

Children receive the Hib vaccine in the first few months of life, which has virtually eliminated what used to be the commonest type of meningitis in the under-fives, known as *Haemophilus influenzae* type B.



David Bramham and Miriam Davies, art students, view *Nolegate*, the latest controversial piece of work to be displayed at Ferens Art Gallery in Hull. Some gallery visitors and local councillors have complained that the creation, by Granular Synthesis of Vienna, is too frightening. Photograph: Steve Hill

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IN BRIEF

Search for killer drug

POLICE were last night investigating the source of a drug after a 22-year-old man collapsed and died from taking Ecstasy. David Breakspear died in Trillick hospital in Truro about 36 hours after he was found collapsed in the lavatories of the Exodus nightclub in Penzance on Saturday.

Mr Breakspear lived with his parents in Penzance, and the couple were at his bedside when he died yesterday.

A Devon and Cornwall police spokesman said: "Our main objective is to identify the supplier to make sure this does not happen to anyone else. It may be related to a poor standard of the drug."

Tourist killed in Greece

GREEK police were yesterday investigating the murder of an Irish woman whose body was found on a golf course close to Athens airport.

Maire Cronin, 34, from Mount Merrion, Dublin, disappeared while returning from a holiday on the Greek island, Spetses, to London, where she lived. A family friend said Ms Cronin died instantly from a single blow to the head, contrary to a coroner's report which said she died of multiple injuries.

Yemen court frees BBC men

THREE British journalists who were arrested in Yemen and charged with filming illegally have been found not guilty by a court and set free, the Foreign Office confirmed today.

Rageh Omaar, a reporter, Robin Barnwell, a producer and cameraman Frank Smith were arrested on May 26 and their equipment confiscated. They were charged with illegally gathering information and violating instructions not to visit an area where tribesmen kidnapped a British family in April.

Parliament prayer vigil

MORE than 100 people linked hands and prayed outside Parliament yesterday as part of the first National Prayer Day for more than 50 years. Hundreds of thousands of Christians around Britain took part in the event which focused on prayers for government, leadership and local communities. As part of the day, prayers were said in Parkhurst prison on the Isle of Wight and Catterick Army garrison in North Yorkshire.

Five share lottery jackpot

FIVE ticketholders each scooped a £1.7m share of Saturday night's £8.6m National Lottery jackpot. The winning numbers were 1, 15, 23, 31, 42 and 48. The bonus ball was 5.

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Tories bid to block reform of the Lords

By Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

CONSERVATIVE peers threatened yesterday to disrupt the Government's legislative programme in order to block House of Lords reform.

Lord Richard, the Leader of the House of Lords, will today announce the appointment of around 600 life peers for an "interim" second chamber. Legislation expected in the autumn will abolish the voting rights of hereditary peers.

The Opposition has already promised to vote against the measures, but will probably be unable to prevent them from going through despite its built-in majority in the Upper House.

The Government has already threatened to invoke the Parliament Act, a little-used device, to stop such a move. However, Conservatives in the Lords can delay the rest of the legislative programme by putting down huge numbers of amendments to Bills.

Yesterday, Lord Cranborne, the Conservative leader in the House of Lords, hinted that the party might resort to such measures. "It certainly could happen. What would be extremely sensible of the Government is if, even at this late stage, it managed to get its act together and realised that what we want to do is to play a constructive part in reform."

He called for a forum to agree a way forward for reform of the Upper House, which could include abolition of the hereditary peerage. "That's not what we are dying in the ditch over. What we do want to do is to prevent an accretion of power to an already over-mighty Prime Minister," he said.

It would be difficult to oppose the Bill setting out plans

for reform because it had been included in Labour's election manifesto, he said. Parliamentary convention prevented the upper chamber from opposing such a measure at second reading. But we do have a constitutional obligation... to improve and amend up to the point when amendments become wrecking amendments," he told BBC1's *On The Record* programme.

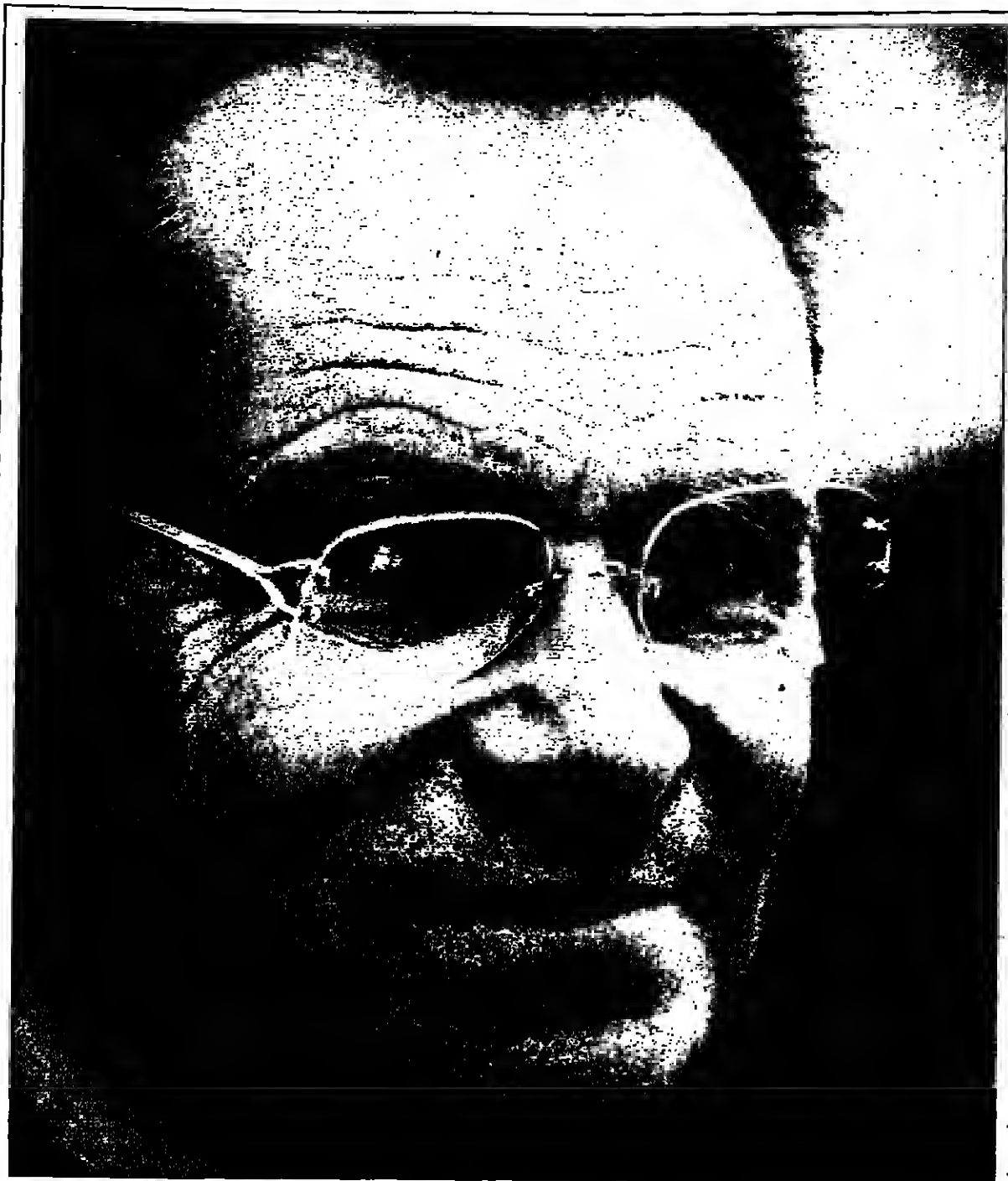
In a separate interview yesterday, the Conservative leader, William Hague, also attacked the Government's reform proposals. Mr Blair's plans would render the House of Lords even less effective, he said. His party would not co-operate in planning the changes because the Government had no clear vision of how a post-reform Lords would function.

"They have had an opportunity to come forward with a different plan for what the second chamber should be like and we would have talked to them about that. They have failed to produce that plan, they don't know what they actually want to do to the House of Lords, so now they are falling back on their contingency plan, which is to say let's just get rid of the hereditary peers and leave it as a huge quango," he said.

The two-stage plan for the House of Lords to be unveiled by Lord Richard would see 750 hereditary peers losing the right they have had since the 14th century to sit in the House of Lords, although they would keep their titles and other privileges.

A Labour Party spokesman said: "William Hague does not want the House of Lords to be reformed... It shows that the Tories are reverting to type, preferring to stand up for the few, not the many."

Leading article, page 14



Lord Archer will be the first party member to face Tory ethics committee

Photograph: Andrew Burman

Archer faces party ethics investigation

A NEW ethics and integrity committee set up by William Hague to monitor behaviour in the Conservative Party is to be tested with a complaint about Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare, writes Fran Abrams.

A senior Conservative has filed a formal complaint about the millionaire novelist, who is campaigning to become the first elected mayor for London.

Sir Timothy Kitson, a former parliamentary private secretary to Sir Edward Heath during his premiership and a previous incumbent of William Hague's Richmond seat in North Yorkshire, has asked whether Lord Archer is a fit candidate.

In a letter to the party chairman, Lord Parkinson, he cited information contained in a biography by the BBC journalist Michael Crick.

The book, *Stranger than Fiction*, says Lord Archer was nearly bankrupt when he resigned as an MP. It also highlights his resignation as vice-chairman of his party after giving £2,000 to a prostitute he had never met, and refers to a Department of Trade and Industry investigation into his share dealings in Anglia Television, where his wife was a non-executive director.

It is the first time the committee has been asked to sit in judgement on a Conservative Party member, and is certain to damage Jeffrey Archer's campaign to win his party's mayoral nomination.

William Hague was guarded in his comments when asked about Sir Timothy's letter.

The party had machinery to deal with allegations, but it would be wrong to pre-judge that procedure,

he said in a television interview. "I have set up a powerful committee... an ethics and integrity committee... because I'm determined that never again will the name of the Conservative Party be blackened by one candidate being guilty of some gross misconduct," he said.

"However that procedure has got to be used fairly."



Sir Timothy Kitson has lodged a complaint against Lord Archer

The party's governing board would decide whether to refer any cases to the ethics and integrity committee, he added. If it was felt they were "substantial", the committee would examine them.

Last night Lord Archer was out of the country at a book fair in Madrid and could not be contacted for comment.

Smith condemned over use of lottery cash

By Fran Abrams

CHRIS SMITH, the Secretary of State for Culture, will come under pressure this week as a committee of MPs publishes a critical report on his handling of the job.

The Heritage Committee of the House of Commons will express particular concern over the use of lottery funds for education and health projects. The money might have had to

be found by the Treasury if the lottery had not paid for the schemes, it will suggest.

An inquiry by the committee into the running of the Department of Culture, Media and Sport also found fault with Mr Smith's handling of a crisis at the Royal Opera House. A report into the affair by Richard Eyre was expected in early May, but has not yet appeared.

There were also reports over the weekend that Downing

Street had questioned Mr Smith's choice of Lord Putnam as the new vice-chairman of the BBC. It was suggested that John Birt, the corporation's director general, might have reservations about the appointment. Mr Birt is known to be close to the Minister without Portfolio, Peter Mandelson.

Last night one committee member said there was concern that money from the lottery was being used to save on other bad-

gets. Mr Smith had not reassured MPs when he appeared before the committee recently.

"The Secretary of State has failed to impress us on a number of occasions. This is not just based on a one-off interview," he said. Another member, the Conservative MP for Lichfield Michael Fabricant, said: "I would not like to be in Chris Smith's shoes."

A spokesman for the Department of Media, Culture

and Sport said he was not aware of the forthcoming report. Another on broadcasting which was published last month was not particularly critical, he said.

On the subject of Lord Putnam's appointment, he said the decision had not yet been made.

"There are some names under consideration and there has been lots of speculation about Lord Putnam, but it is still being finalised," he said. Although there were rum-

ours earlier in the year that Mr Smith might lose his job in the expected July reshuffle, he was thought to have strengthened his position recently.

However, a critical report from the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee, chaired by the senior Labour backbencher Gerald Kaufman, would be damaging. Mr Kaufman, a former minister, has a great deal of clout within the Parliamentary party.



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Chemical waste: Minister reluctant to approve £1m cost of clearing 300 toxic shells buried on land behind villagers' gardens

MoD blocks clean-up of mustard gas field

By Fran Abrams
and Clare Garner

MINISTERS have cancelled clearance of hundreds of acres of land contaminated by chemical weapons because they say the work would cost too much.

Buried beneath 350 acres of poppy-strewn fields in East Gornedon, Wiltshire, lie spent shells and mortars which may contain highly toxic mustard and phosgene gases.

The site was used during both World Wars for artillery practice. About 300 of a total of 2,000 shells are believed to have chemical agents in them. Others may contain explosives.

But despite the fears of villagers whose gardens back on to the 110-acre cereal field and 240 acres of adjacent Wiltshire countryside, ministers are reluctant to approve the £1m cost of clearing the area. The local MP, Robert Key, says the work was due to go ahead last year but emergency planners were told not to go ahead.



One of many shells turned up by Rex Bowhill's plough

The Ministry of Defence is in talks with the Environment Agency about whether there is a danger that the toxins could leak into the water supply. The EA says it does not have any reason to suppose there will be leakage.

John Spellar, the Defence Minister, has said his department is not funded for clearance work of this sort. In a letter to Mr Key, he said such a large operation would cause a great deal of disturbance and the material might be best left "safely buried".

A spokesman for the department said no final decision had been made.

The job would take a team of 100 Royal Engineers four months to complete. Emer-

gency services would have to be on hand in case of accidents, and special measures would have to be taken to ensure the safety of the local residents. The materials are buried up to six metres deep and the soldiers would have to dig down to six feet to ensure the area was safe.

Mr Key has written to residents alerting them to the problem. The materials, if dug up, could be extremely dangerous, even though many of the shells are spent. "I find it astonishing that the minister has no doubt about this. We are not just talking about public safety. House prices are also being affected. It's the only news at the moment in the area," Mr Key said.

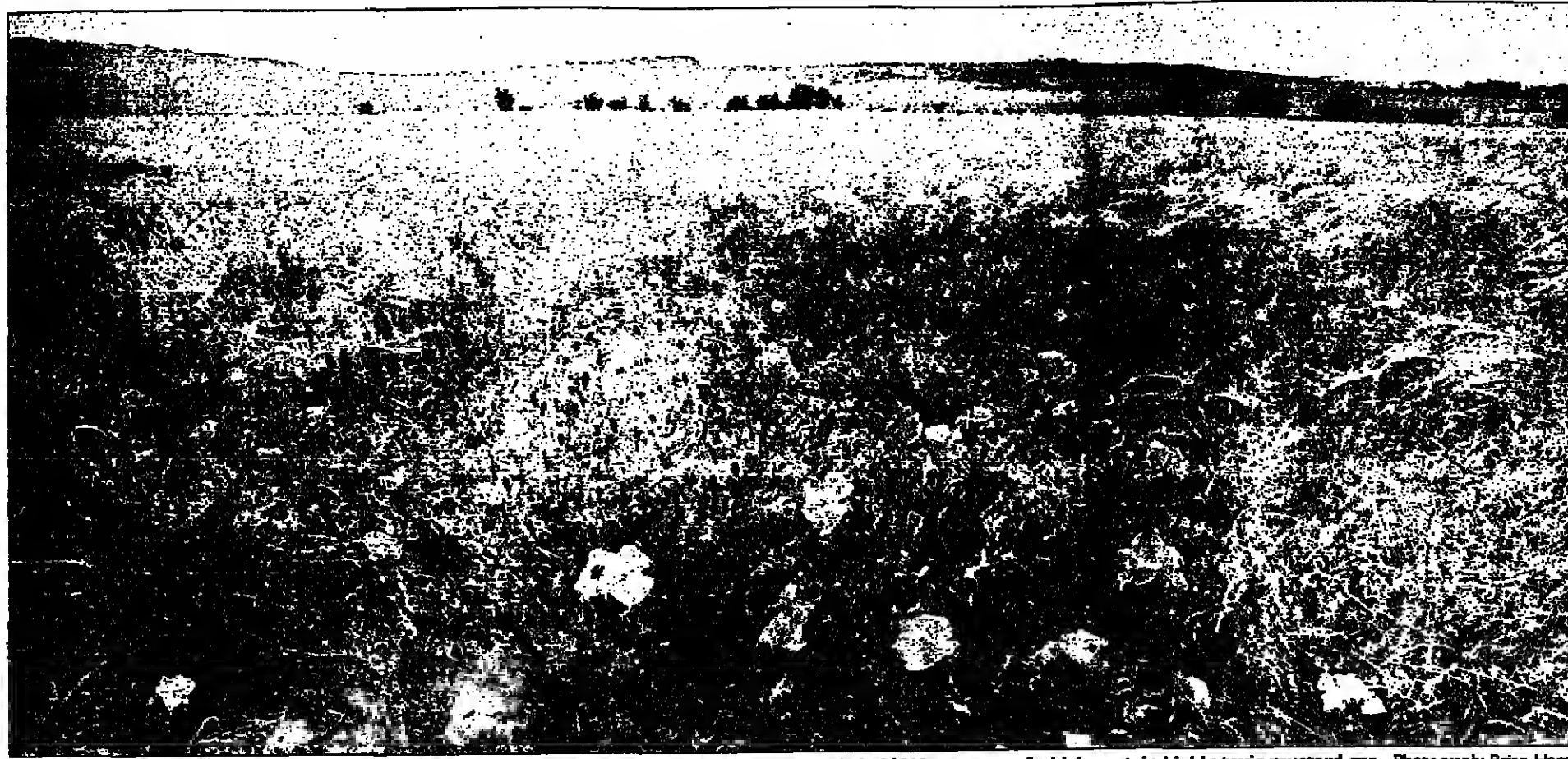
He quoted the Chief Fire Officer as saying: "I offer no comment on whether the field should or should not be cleared. That is a political decision to be made with the aid of professional judgements and, clearly, the minister has decided to take a gamble that no ordinance will ever be uncovered that will cause a threat to life."

Villagers are disgusted that expense is being used as an excuse not to clear the field. One said: "It's rumoured that the new laboratories at Porton experimental establishment will cost £23m and they are building a £5m defence estate at Winterbourne Gunner."

Wooden pegs which marked the potentially dangerous sites disappeared last week. John Childs, 70, a villager, said the nearest was just 15 metres from his garden fence. "They spent a lot of time there. We didn't know what they were doing. They said they were carrying out a geographical survey," he said.

In September 1996, Rex Bowhill, the farmer who owns the field behind the villagers' gardens, received a letter from the Defence Nuclear Biological and Chemical Centre at Winterbourne Gunner, in Wiltshire. It warned that there was "medium to heavy contamination" beneath the surface of the field and that Mr Bowhill should stop ploughing the land.

Mr Bowhill has always known there was ammunition beneath the surface of his field - because he keeps finding it. "This is the sort of stuff we have brought up," he said, holding an empty shell. "This one looked fairly innocuous so I kept it. I didn't bother getting the bomb disposal out."



The poppy field in East Gornedon, Wiltshire, beneath which lie around 2,000 shells from both World Wars, many of which contain highly toxic mustard gas. Photograph: Brian Harris



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Students work in sex clubs to fund courses

By Janine Gibson
Media Correspondent

A SOCIOLOGY professor has warned that university students are increasingly turning to work in the sex industry to supplement grants and combat financial pressures.

Professor Roger Matthews, of Middlesex University, who features in a Carlton Television documentary to be screened tomorrow, claims he has discovered extensive evidence that a fast-growing number of students now work in strip clubs, hostess bars and as prostitutes to support themselves.

According to one student who has worked in hostess bars, 40 per cent of the hostesses are students. She said that it is now so common that the customers' opening conversational gambit is often "so, what course are you on?"

Professor Matthews says that, especially in London, students are drawn in through escort or club work and there is a "classic pattern" where their involvement in the sex trade escalates. He suspects that escort agencies target students with advertisements in local papers.

"Those ads say you can earn £75 a night, no experience necessary. A student is going to look at that and think it sounds good, without being entirely clear what is required for that £75," he said.

Claire (not her real name), a 24-year-old student at a university in Greater London, has a 2:1 degree in media studies and is currently studying for an MA in criminology. She was the first person in her single-parent



Sarah-Jo Healy, who left university with a degree and thousands of pounds in debt, now works as a table dancer to pay off the debts. Photograph: Steve Forrest.

family to go to university and felt it was "a big thing" that she should finish her degree despite increasing financial pressure. To fund her studies and support herself, she began stripping.

By Claire's third year at university, the Government had cut grants, offering loans as a replacement. Despite taking up the loans and doing regular bar work, she was still £700 overdrawn. She says she started stripping because the hours enabled her to keep up her studies and she made more money in two nights than in a week working in a bar.

She got a job at a Soho club from an advertisement in a local paper. "I was making, on average, £500 a week stripping. Through that, I managed to fund a trip around the world, and then my MA, which I wouldn't have had the opportunity to do otherwise."

Claire became involved in prostitution when she began working at a hostess bar. "A lot of clubs are wary of girls who will do deals on the side with the customers, because they would lose their licence. It's different in hostess bars. There it's accepted that most girls will go off with men at the end of the night."

"I knew some people who were already working in the hostess bar. The men propositioned you and then you might think that they're OK and relatively safe; it depends how much money they're offering basically. Most of the girls won't go for less than £200."

Claire says that in her experience around 40 per cent of the hostesses are students and most will end up working as prostitutes. "The men know that you're there because of financial problems, so if they offer you enough money you will agree. For a lot of women, it's the

only way to get through their courses."

The situation for students is set to get harder from September when the Government maintenance grant will be scrapped. Most students will also face a maximum of £1,000 a year in tuition fees.

Financial hardship is shared by graduates who struggle to pay off overdrafts and loans. Sarah-Jo Healy graduated from Leicester's De Montfort university with a degree in theatre studies last June and with a £1,000 overdraft and £3,500 in student loans from her course. She had worked as a glamour

model through the final year of her course, before that she worked in Safeway.

She moved to London where she can earn between £200 and £500 a night as a table dancer and try and pay off her debts.

She feels the demands on students now are disgusting: "It's becoming elitist. If it was me going into university now I wouldn't have been able to do it because the prospect of that much debt would have put me off," she said.

"I don't see why some very bright people, who can't afford to go, should miss out."

Hospitals ordered to show death figures

HOSPITALS are to be forced to publish controversial new league tables showing the death rates of their patients.

The move comes in the wake of the scandal at Bristol Royal Infirmary, where 29 children died after heart operations.

From October, when the tables are introduced, there will be an annual chart of the numbers of deaths at hospitals treating patients for serious diseases including cancer and heart problems.

Frank Dobson, the Secretary of State for Health, hopes the move will enable "meaningful comparisons" of death rates by hospitals to be made.

Mr Dobson also sees it as a "powerful weapon to raise standards in the NHS". A Downing Street source said it was also expected to "revive quality controls" and to act as an "early warning" of problems. The tables will focus on deaths following surgery, but include details such as the ages of the patients and the difficulties surrounding their cases.

The Government is also to set up an independent commission for health improvement which will involve every NHS trust being visited every three or four years. It will have special powers to investigate where problems arise and be advised by a range of people, including patients themselves.

Mr Dobson said: "Patients, wherever they live, have a right to expect the best possible care and treatment in the NHS. In the vast majority of cases they get it. However, the appalling tragedy of Bristol cannot be allowed to happen again."

"These tables will allow us to identify official problems at an early stage and to act if necessary. Standards matter to doctors, they matter to the

Government, most of all they matter to patients.

"These tables will help provide the quality assurance patients want."

Stephen Thornton, chief executive of the NHS Confederation, which represents the health authorities and NHS trusts, yesterday gave a guarded welcome to the Government's plans to oblige hospitals to publish league tables showing death rates.

Mr Thornton supported the Government's initiative, saying it was "best in the long run to be straight forward and open so that the public know where they stand". But he cautioned that the tables would have to be weighted to take account of the age of patients being treated, their condition on arrival at hospital, and a variety of other factors.

Mr Thornton said: "We must be careful to compare like with like and to avoid defensive medicine where clinicians refuse to carry out some types of surgery."

Christine Hancock, general secretary of the Royal College of Nursing, welcomed the initiative to publish league tables on death rates as a positive move giving patients more information.

But she stressed that a more personal approach was required if patients were to understand fully the implications of planned surgery.

"It's good for people to have information so they can understand, fully, the potential risks, seriousness and benefits of an operation," she said.

"But more important than overall hospital figures is the time and opportunity for an individual patient to understand the benefits and risks involved with their particular operation with their doctor."

Elgin Marbles 'scraped clean'

BRITISH Museum officials are to call in international experts to discuss damage caused to the Elgin Marbles.

They acted yesterday following claims in a book charting the sculptures' history that museum staff had irreparably damaged them 60 years ago.

William St Clair, a historian, claimed workers scrubbed the marbles with metal scrapers in an effort to make them white - an episode which, he claimed, was denied and covered up by museum trustees.

But Andrew Hamilton, a

museum spokesman, denied there had been a cover-up and said the museum released details publicly in the late 1930s after becoming aware of "over-cleaning" by staff.

Although some of the surfaces were lost, the damage had been exaggerated, he added. "The marbles were over-cleaned by museum staff using methods not approved of at the time and without the approval or knowledge of the curator."

Mr Hamilton continued: "Mr St Clair calls for a public inquiry, but we feel how we'd like to deal

with it is by inviting him to discuss the issues with the museum and other outside scholars."

The marbles, which are around 2,400 years old, were brought to Britain by Lord Elgin in 1801.

Some people believe he looted them from the Parthenon, in Athens, later selling them to the British Museum for £35,000 in 1816.

Mr St Clair's claims could provoke a fresh diplomatic row with Greece, whose government has battled for decades to get the sculptures returned.



The Elgin Marbles: A book claims they were damaged

A pinch of fluoride in Scottish salt

FLUORIDE could be added to salt in Scotland in a bid to improve the state of people's teeth, it emerged yesterday.

A pilot project in Scotland is being drawn up to study the effect of adding low levels of fluoride to salt in what is hoped would be a cheap and effective way of tackling a major public health problem.

On average, children in the UK have 2.5 decayed teeth by the age of 15: in Scotland the figure is 4.2 teeth. Around 10 per cent of households in Britain - 5.5 million people - have fluoridated water supplies at the moment to help combat decay.

But in Scotland no supplies are fluoridated and officials estimate 40 per cent of the population would be left out of any programme to add it to the water because many of the small water companies there would not find it cost-effective to add the chemical.

Health officials are turning to salt, which has been fluoridated on some parts of the Continent for 40 years, as a possible alternative.

However, they are worried the move could encourage Scots to eat more salt leading to problems of increased blood pressure and cardiovascular disease in a country which already has one of the worst diet records in Europe.

Officials are asking the World Health Organisation to carry out a pilot study to see whether adding fluoride, which strengthens tooth enamel and guards against plaque, would lead to raised salt intakes.

In Sandwell, West Midlands, where fluoride was added to water in 1988, tooth decay in five-year-olds has fallen by half. The introduction of fluoride toothpaste in the early 1970s has also had a huge impact on the number of childhood cavities.

DAILY POEM

Hope

By Edith Södergran (translated by Herbert Lomas)

I want to let go
so I don't give a damn about fine writing,
I'm rolling my sleeves up.
The dough's rising...
Oh what a shame
I can't bake cathedrals...
that sublimity of style
I've always yearned for...
Child of our time -
haven't you found the right shell for your soul?
Before I die I shall
bake a cathedral.

Our poems until Wednesday come from the latest batch of Poems on the Underground. The 15 poems by leading modern European poets, which will appear in London Tube carriages throughout June and July, mark the British presidency of the European Union.

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120 DAY NOTICE ACCOUNT Interest paid monthly.	£100,000+ £50,000+ £25,000+ £10,000+ £5,000+ £2,500+ £1,000+	6.27% 6.03% 5.94% 5.84% 5.70% 5.51% 5.51%	5.01% 4.82% 4.75% 4.67% 4.56% 4.41% 4.41%
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PREMIER TESSA (FOLLOW UP) (Issues 1 & 2) (No longer available). All Balanced Guaranteed Equity TESSAs receive 7.15% on 2nd year investments.	£9,000+ £5,000+ £3,000+ £500+	7.25% 7.15% 7.15% 5.15%	
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ملكا من الاصل

Pilots' strike casts cloud over future of French national airline

By John Lichfield
in Paris

THE Air France pilots' strike enters its second week today, humiliating the French government in the first week of the World Cup and threatening the long-term future of the state-owned airline itself.

Despite a personal intervention by the Prime Minister, Lionel Jospin, unions and man-

agement failed to return to the negotiating table yesterday, after breaking off talks on Saturday morning. Instead, unions representing other Air France employees demanded a round-table discussion with management in which some attacked the selfishness and "blackmail" of the pilots and others threatened to make matching demands.

The issue is no longer whether the strike will disrupt

long-distance travel to the World Cup, which begins on Wednesday. It already has. Thousands of fans have already switched to other airlines or other European destinations. The one in four Air France internal and long-distance flights which was operating yesterday was taking off less than half-full. Even if the strike were to be settled today - still a possibility - Air France would need two clear

days to return flights to normal. Once the World Cup begins, the degree of disruption is likely to be slight. Air France - the official airline of the competition - has pledged to maintain all cross its special flights with in France for the 32 national squads, and fans travelling between the 10 host towns should be able to switch to other internal airlines or the railways. A strike by a minority of train

drivers is threatened on Wednesday but this is not expected to cause more than a few cancellations. More serious perhaps is a continuing series of wildcat actions by airport ground staff, which has forced passengers flying with other airlines to carry their own luggage to and from their aircraft in the last few days. (The only consolation at Charles de Gaulle Airport,

north of Paris, was that the car-parks were free: the attendants were also on strike). France had hoped to present to the world in the next five weeks a picture of a modern, efficient, welcoming country. But thanks to the pilots' strike, and the other nagging disputes, this effort has crashed on take-off. In his first intervention in the dispute on Saturday, Mr Jospin made it clear that his real con-

cern was no longer the World Cup but the survival of Air France itself. Union leaders representing other airline employees made the same point; but they also warned that any further concessions to the pilots would bring a flood of "me too" demands which could ground the state-owned airline indefinitely. The pilots had been asked to take a 15 per cent pay cut to

help the airline finance investment in new aircraft and to cut permanent costs before a partial privatisation planned this autumn. A series of copycat disputes with ground staff and flight attendants could wreck the partial sell-off and leave the airline incapable of meeting the more open competition between European airlines forced by the European Union last year.

IN BRIEF

Guinea quells troop revolt

GUINEA-BISSAU'S government claimed yesterday to have put down a military revolt by dissident soldiers, but diplomats said the situation in the tiny West African state was still confused.

The defence minister, Samba Lamine Mane said government troops were in control of the country after rebels attacked the military high command and other strategic points. But Lisbon's ambassador in the capital Bissau, Francisco Henriques da Silva, said, the situation was still unclear, with some pockets of resistance.

— Reuters, Lisbon

Mob 'justice'

TWO teenagers were beaten to death by a 5,000-strong crowd which accused them of raping a six-year-old girl in the village of Gbadana, 65 miles north-east of Cairo.

— AP, Cairo

Painful tunes

THE New Israeli Opera has decided against performing works by Richard Wagner - whose operas blared over loudspeakers in Nazi death camps - because the company believes Israelis are still too divided over the issue.

— AP, Jerusalem

Prada stake

THE Italian luxury goods and fashion group Prada has amassed a 5 per cent stake in the rival fashion group Gucci to become one of its biggest shareholders.

— Reuters, Milan

Bridge of size

SOME 275,000 people, mostly Danes, took part in the unofficial inauguration of the weekend of Europe's longest suspension bridge over part of the Great Belt waterway between western and eastern Denmark. On 14 June, Queen Margrethe will inaugurate the 11-mile long bridge link connecting the islands of Zealand and Funen.

— Reuters, Copenhagen



An ethnic Albanian man helping his son drink from a bottle of water shortly after arriving in Albania, having escaped the fighting in Serbia's Kosovo province. Photograph: Yannis Behrakis

Kosovo rebels in call-to-arms

By Ismet Hajdari
in Pristina

KOSOVO'S rebel army appealed yesterday for more ethnic Albanians to join up and "fight for freedom" from the Serbian forces waging a fierce offensive.

The call, published in the Albanian-language daily *Koha Ditore*, showed that the will of the Kosovo Liberation Army has not been broken by the Serbs' latest campaign, which reportedly continued with more shelling in Kosovo.

The Serbs' latest offensive in the west of the secessionist province has left at least 50 people dead and 200 missing, ac-

cording to ethnic Albanian officials, in addition to sending thousands fleeing from ruined villages.

But it is not clear how much of a setback the actions have dealt the KLA, a guerrilla group which claims to control some 40 per cent of the province of Kosovo, and which enjoys growing popularity.

"Come to strengthen our troops against the enemy artillery and enemy infantry," the KLA statement said. It appealed "for the last time" to ethnic Albanian political organisations to give up their policy of a peaceful struggle for independence and join the KLA.

Albanian TV said the Serbs

shelled at least two villages in Kosovo yesterday. It also said ethnic Albanian militants - presumably the KLA - blew up the police headquarters in Ratkoc, and amid fierce fighting between the two sides.

Federal authorities in Yugoslavia, which now consists of just Serbia and Montenegro, escorted more than 40 diplomats for a look at the besieged region yesterday. But journalists were excluded from the tour except for those from Yugoslav state-controlled media.

Kosovo's ethnic Albanians comprise 90 per cent of the 2.2 million inhabitants, and most demand to secede from Serbia and Yugoslavia. Western pow-

ers are against any change of borders but want the Serbs to cease their offensive and give Kosovo the autonomy taken away by Serbia in 1989 as a way to suppress the independence movement.

The offensive that began in late May has stirred increasing international concern and fears of igniting a wider war in the Balkans. The United States is expected to reimpose sanctions against Serbia after a White House meeting today.

Tony Blair spoke on the telephone yesterday to President Clinton and the Russian President, Boris Yeltsin, about the crisis in Kosovo. The Prime Minister and Mr Clinton agreed

on the need to send a "strong message" to Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic that "the activities of the Yugoslav forces [in Kosovo] were totally unacceptable," according to Mr Blair's spokesman. Mr Blair and Mr Clinton agreed that they "must work together at the United Nations and elsewhere, to make sure that Mr Milosevic is in no doubt we're taking on the issue," the spokesman said.

Britain and the United States are expected to seek a UN Security Council resolution authorising force against Yugoslavia for its attacks on ethnic Albanians in Kosovo.

In a separate telephone call to Boris Yeltsin, Mr Blair urged

the Russian President to use his influence to help persuade Belgrade to stop the "barbarism" against civilians in Kosovo.

Mr Yeltsin "undertook to do so," the Prime Minister's spokesman said. He added that Mr Blair "we would be looking for Russian support" in the UN.

The exodus of more than 10,000 Albanians into Albania last week, and another 7,000-10,000 into Montenegro, also has stirred worry in the West.

Refugees from Kosovo in Montenegro yesterday said they walked for three days before reaching safety. Most are women, children and elderly men, some of whom said they were beaten by Yugoslav troops.

Swiss vote for genetic research

By Rupert Cornwell

SWITZERLAND'S mighty pharmaceutical industry was breathing more easily last night after Swiss voters overwhelmingly rejected a proposal to ban the patenting and production of genetically altered plants and animals.

After a highly-charged campaign, it seemed that not one of the country's cantons would approve the referendum proposal, "the initiative for the protection of life and the environment against genetic manipulation". For a referendum to pass in Switzerland, it must be approved by both a majority of voters and a majority of the 26 cantons.

Television exit polls predicted a two-to-one majority against the idea, even in the larger German-speaking part of the country deemed more sensitive to environmental issues. In francophone Switzerland, the referendum was never likely to pass, with one canton, Neuchâtel, opposing it by a 78 per cent margin.

The issue has aroused high passions, pitting a core Swiss economic interest against the environmentalist and fundamentalist lobbies, who argue that the manipulation of genes for commercial purposes risks letting dangerous organisms into the food chain, and could lead to unethical treatment of animals used in the research.

But opponents said a "yes" vote would be akin to Switzerland shooting itself in the foot, given the colossal economic importance of pharmaceutical companies such as Roche and Novartis (formerly CIBA-Geigy and Sandoz).

Unsurprisingly Basle, where the industry is based, voted 67 per cent against in the referendum - even though it is German-speaking. Before the vote, both the industry and the Bern government warned that a "yes" vote would force much current research abroad, and with it many highly-paid jobs.

Summit exposes depth of the Arab world's disunity

By Robert Fisk
in Beirut

IN THEORY, everything was going the Arab way. Pakistan had produced the first "Islamic bomb" - which was certainly Iran's description of the nuclear tests near its border - and even Washington was expressing impatience with Israel's right-wing government. But then the Arabs decided to hold yet another summit - and promptly proved that they are as divided as ever.

Arab unity is, of course, a long-extinct beast that last breathed, ironically, under the Ottoman empire. But Israel's continued settlement expansion and refusal to accept America's proposal for a 13 per cent Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, did at least give the emirs, princes and dictators of the Middle East the chance to speak with one voice. And they blew it.

First it was Jordan and Syria that disagreed. The Jordanians do not want to harm their own peace treaty with Israel by breaking relations with the nation which sent its assassins to Amman less than a year ago to murder a Hamas leader. King Hussein believes that holding Israel to the letter of its agreements with the Palestinians is more worthwhile than damaging Jordan's own bilateral relations.



President Chirac's withdrawal call angered the Israelis

based on Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab land, there had been "neither peace nor even the semblance of peace," the Syrians said.

Several Arab states would like to reimpose the boycott of all companies doing business with Israel but those other nations which have opened relations

with Israel - Oman, Qatar and Morocco - do not want to destroy them, even though they have frozen contact since Benjamin Netanyahu was elected prime minister in 1996. As for Yasser Arafat, he has now conceded so much to the Israelis that he is, in the eyes of many Arab states, hopelessly trapped - at risk of losing his tiny gains if he breaks his own relations with the Israelis, unable to gain further concessions if he keeps to his side of the "peace process".

At the Euro-Med summit in Palermo last week, the Arabs did manage to persuade the Europeans that progress in their own partnership depended on the progress of the Israeli-Arab "peace". Israel had tried to separate the explosive crisis in the Middle East from other aspects of European-Mediterranean co-operation.

All the same, it must have come as a relief to the Arabs when they heard that the United States wanted them to postpone their summit until Washington had decided whether any further pressure could be put on Israel to abide by the withdrawal agreements.

Washington's "leverage" over Israel, however, is about as mythical as Arab unity; and Mr Netanyahu is as blithe as ever in dismissing his critics. Israel's latest rebuff was directed at

President Jacques Chirac who declared in Beirut a week ago that Israel must abide by the terms of UN Security Council resolution 425 and withdraw its troops from southern Lebanon unconditionally.

An Israeli spokesman claimed last week that Mr Chirac's "interpretation" of 425 was at odds with that of the rest of the world, a statement that mystified the Arabs as much as it did the French. Israel wants to set conditions prior to its withdrawal from Lebanon, including the disarming of its Hizbollah guerrilla enemies. But resolution 425, as Mr Chirac correctly pointed out, does not permit any conditions to be laid down.

A day after Israel expressed its anger with Mr Chirac, an odd incident occurred in southern Lebanon when the French delegate to the five-power ceasefire committee - which meets regularly at the UN's headquarters on the frontier - was met by gunfire from a member of Israel's proxy South Lebanon Army militia. The gunman fired into the air with a sub-machine gun as the Frenchmen and his UN escort passed a checkpoint on the coast road south of Tyre. No one was hurt, although the French noted that it was the second incident of its kind in less than a month.

Potency pill has Middle Eastern men dreaming of 1,001 nights

By Robert Fisk

IN Saudi Arabia, it's selling on the black market for \$50 a pill. In Egypt, it's banned, but costs \$25 a pill under the counter. In Lebanon, no man would even dream of suggesting he needed it - which is just as well because the government refuses to import the drug until it has conducted tests. But Viagra has arrived in the Middle East.

In the Arab world, male potency is not a subject you discuss over the dinner table - or anywhere else - because many men appear to be obsessed with the subject. The production of children is regarded as proof of manhood.

A married man without children is constantly and publicly asked - to the point of harassment - why he has no offspring. So is it any surprise that dreams of male virility are now running amok in the region?

Egyptian chemists claim privately that they have been overwhelmed with requests for Viagra, which is one reason why the Cairo police and health ministry officials have been raiding pharmacies in the capital to hunt for the black market drugs.

According to Gamila Mousa, Egypt's deputy health min-



But has he got his Viagra? The Western image of Arabian romance, exemplified by Rudolf Valentino in *The Sheik*

ister, the Pfizer company has applied for permission to sell the pills in Egypt. "But the drug is illegal and we want to test and try it before we allow it in our market."

Already, three Egyptians have been taken ill after using Viagra, which is one reason why the Cairo police and health ministry officials have been raiding pharmacies in the capital to hunt for the black market drugs.

A spokesman said the government "had taken account of the fact that the nature of the Egyptian man was different to

that of an American". None the less 60 married men have voluntarily agreed to take Viagra, a step which was greeted by two of Egypt's best-known humorists, Ahmed Ragab and Mustafa Hussein in the daily *Al-Akhar*, with a plan for government subsidised contraceptives to offset the effects of the magical blue pill.

In the United Arab Emirates, Sheikh Mahmoud Khalifa, an official in the department of Islamic affairs, has announced that a married

man may be permitted to use the drug with his wife but it would be banned for unmarried men, as it "provokes vice".

But Dubai pharmacies are being inundated with telephone calls for the drug: one man in his seventies offered \$94 for a single Viagra pill.

In Saudi Arabia, a single pill is selling for \$33 under the counter in Jeddah, but \$80 in Riyadh. What that says about the virility of Jeddah men remains to be seen.

In Yemen, there is talk of Viagra replacing the lethargic effects of qat, the nationally famous drug without which no holiday is complete (its principal effect on the user is to make him fall asleep - the very opposite of Viagra's purpose). Women, too, have been telephoning chemists in the Arab world, demanding to know if they have stocks of the pill.

In Lebanon, there hasn't been a male potency drug around since the civil war - when armed men would regularly shoot at migrating storks. Banned down, it was claimed, the storks could be consumed, transforming the gunman's sex life. If Viagra really hits town, there are likely to be a lot more storks flying over the Middle East.

Italians playing away, page 10

Eritreans in fear of more air strikes

By Karin Davies
in Asmara

ERITREANS were bracing themselves yesterday for more bombardments by Ethiopian warplanes after a deadline passed for hundreds of foreigners to flee to safety. Hectic diplomatic efforts were under way to prevent the border conflict from exploding into a full-scale war.

Eritreans scanned cloudless blue skies and listened for the high-pitched whoosh of the Ethiopian MiG-23 fighters that had bombed their capital's airport on Friday and Saturday. None came.

Skirmishes were reported, however, along the disputed border. Ethiopia said it had re-occupied its border town of Zala Anbessa, 65 miles south-west of Asmara, defeating in a day-long battle the Eritrean forces which captured the town last week.

Eritrean government spokesman, Isaac Yared, said

the Eritrean troops retreated voluntarily and unmolested back to their side of the border. "They decided it was time to go," he said.

President Isaias Afwerki is hopeful that a summit of heads of state of the Organisation of African Unity today will yield new ideas for a negotiated settlement, his spokesman Yemane Gebremeskel said.

The US Assistant Secretary of State, Susan Rice, left an OAU foreign ministers' meeting on Saturday in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, apparently for Ethiopia and Eritrea. She is promoting a peace plan for the two feuding countries that was drafted by the United States and Rwanda.

"The peace recommendations by the United States and Rwanda constitute a reasonable basis for a peaceful resolution for the conflict," she said on Saturday. The proposal includes a call to Eritrea to return to positions held prior to 6 May,

when current hostilities reportedly broke out - in other words, to withdraw from what Ethiopia considers its territory.

Eritrea, wedged between northern Ethiopia and the Red Sea, however, claims it is rightfully in territory defined by boundaries drawn by Italy when it occupied Eritrea in 1885.

Mr Gebremeskel said Eritrea broadly agreed with the

four-point peace plan, but he said any accord must include more specifics, including how and when the border would be demarcated and by whom.

"We need to work out the details to achieve a lasting solution," he said. "This dispute has gone on for too long already."

African leaders including presidents Yoweri Museveni, Nelson Mandela of South

Africa, Hassan Gouled Aptidon of Djibouti and Daniel arap Moi of Kenya called Mr Afwerki over the weekend to encourage a negotiated settlement.

Eritrean civilians were hoping to avoid war. Ethiopia's army outnumbered Eritrea's 40,000-strong force by about three to one. Eritrea's tiny air force is no match for Ethiopia's.

Mokonnen, a 27-year-old

telephone operator, said he was afraid, though optimistic that a peace pact be forged between the one-time allies.

"We are still free. We are still brothers, only a few people are doing this thing. Our government wants peace, and we are struggling to solve it peacefully," he said.

Ethiopian jets bombed a military-civilian airport on the

outskirts of Asmara on Friday and Saturday, forcing embassies to step up their exit plans.

American, Italian, German and British planes ferried more than a thousand foreigners out of harm's way over the weekend after Ethiopia agreed to temporarily halt the bombing.

Eritrean rebels were instrumental in helping the

Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front overthrow the military regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam in July 1991, and Eritrea gained independence from Ethiopia in 1993.

But the two countries dispute more than a half-dozen areas along their common border, which was drawn by Italy after it conquered Eritrea in 1885.



Family members and friends of a child killed during a bombing raid by the Eritrean Air Force grieving at a funeral in Mekele at the weekend

Photograph: Reuters

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Italy's football widows prepared to play away

WHEN Italian males settle down in front of their televisions to watch World Cup games this week, they may not be feeling as confident as they look. Not, naturally, because they fear that Italy will be beaten: that would never occur to them.

No, behind the Frascati-inspired camaraderie a more sinister doubt will be lurking: will their loved ones be among the 27 per cent of wives and girlfriends who told a survey for *Notte* (We Women) magazine that they would not hesitate to use those precious 90 minute breaks to betray their partners?

If an impressive 48 per cent of women said they would be standing by their man and television set for the whole two weeks, one in three of these admitted that she would only do so to avoid family rows and post-Mondiale recriminations.

From the remaining 52 per cent came a distinct and collective sigh of relief: 15 per cent of them couldn't wait for a night out on the empty, and blissfully male-free town; 10 per cent planned to exploit their loved one's inattention to escape to some isolated hide-away for two weeks; 5 per cent said they would catch up on missed films and plays, and 1 per cent said they would rather spend the World Cup period playing bar billiards than watching 22 men sweating over a ball.

Then there are the 27 per cent who feel the coming weeks are a prime opportunity for kick-starting tired libidos with a World Cup fling: of these, 16 per cent said they would not be averse to a little dalliance on the

As World Cup fever grips men, their women have other ideas, writes Anne Hanley in Rome

sidelines, while 11 per cent said that they would be going flat out to get the ball in the net.

If this extreme reaction smacks of vendetta, you need look no further than the RAI state broadcasting company's World Cup advertising campaign to understand why so many Italian women have a bone to pick with football fanaticism.

In one advertisement, mugshots of a clearly disgruntled blonde appear next to the words, "profession: girlfriend. Behaviour: hammer-action. Distinguishing features: never lets up. Typical remarks: 'Let's go out, let's go out, let's go out'."

Flashing beneath is the warning: "Avoid her". In another, a doting mother is described as "asphyxiating" and "highly dangerous" owing to her tendency to obstruct the flow of play with offers of food.

The advertising agency McCann Erickson has defended the campaign, describing it as "clearly ironic". For many Italians - and not only women - the irony is outweighed by the offensive stereotype. According to Vera Skopci, a psychologist: "Those ads simply throw up a huge barrier between men and women. And they're so aggressive."

If, as seems likely, the campaign swells the ranks of Italian women out for a good time over the World Cup period, it may also provide some help and inspiration for those would-be cuckolders who have been wondering just where they are going to find an available alternative when Italian males en masse have switched TV sets on and love lives off.

In the third advertisement of the series, a recently-jilted boyfriend is pushed roughly aside by his best mate for whom watching the match is infinitely more important than offering comfort and succour.

Even the most enterprising women are unlikely to get everything they want. The Italian team captain, Paolo Maldini, topped *Notte* magazine's list of most fancied footballers, with the Brazilian striker Ronaldo at number two.

Italy and Brazil will no doubt ensure their stars' attention is not distracted from the French fields so, no matter how fancy their footwear, it is unlikely they will be able to capitalise on their popularity, or that *Notte* magazine readers will be able to fulfil their fantasies.

Still, women may reap subtle revenge simply by leaving a copy of the *Notte* magazine survey on the coffee table in the living room as they head for the front door.

Crucial football may be, but Italian male pride should never be underestimated. The suggestion of a betrayal in the offing may revive a flagging passion - at least when Maldini's men are not on the pitch.

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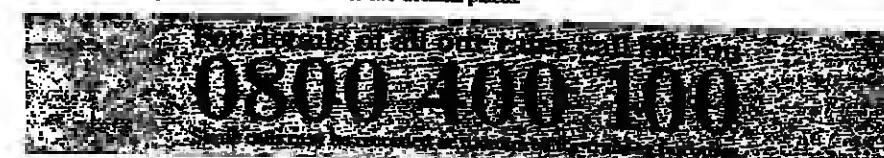
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Once-liberal NY puts prison hero on death row

by David Usborne
New York

THREE YEARS after the Republican Governor of New York, George Pataki, honoured an election pledge and reinstated capital punishment in the Empire State, a former prison guard has been sentenced to death for the murder of three people in a robbery that went wrong in an illegal Brooklyn social club.

Darrell Harris, who was given a hero's medal in 1987 by former New York City Mayor Ed Koch, for saving a colleague's life during a prison riot, will become the first inmate on the state's death row since the death penalty's reintroduction. Barring successful appeals, he will be executed by lethal injection.

While capital punishment has been embraced by large sections of a country that is fearful of crime, New York for years remained a hold-out along with other liberal New England states. Calls for its reinstatement were fiercely resisted by Mr Pataki's three-term predecessor, Democrat Mario Cuomo.

The last person executed in

the state was Eddie Lee Mays, who died in the electric chair - "Old Sparky" - in 1963. Mays had killed a woman while robbing a bar. There are now 28 defendants in pending death penalty cases across New York.

The fate of Mr Harris, who is 39, was decided by the same jury that convicted him last month. Deliberations lasted 22 hours and were clearly contentious; at one point two jury members came to blows and had to be restrained. When their decision was announced in the State Supreme Court in Brooklyn one jury member broke down in loud sobs. Mr Harris said nothing but slumped back in his chair.

Defence lawyers had contended that the prison riot incident, which took place in 1986, had traumatised him and sent him into a downward spiral of drug taking and alcoholism. His rampage at the Club Happiness drinking club in Brooklyn in the early morning of 7 December 1996, was the result of despair and substance abuse, they said.

Mr Harris, who had been suspended from the prison service because of his drinking

problems, shot to death Jerome Sims, 58, and Michael Harris, 37 (no relation). After running out of bullets, he stabbed and killed Evelyn Davis, 32, who begged to be spared because she was the mother of "five babies".

"It is a tragedy for the people of the state of New York," defence lawyer Russell Neufeld said after the decision. "It's a tragedy for all the families involved and not just the victim's families who somehow think this will ease the pain that they have."

Mr Pataki applauded the jury's decision saying it would send a message to other potential murderers. "They will face the risk of losing their own life if they take another," the Governor declared. Mario Cuomo, by contrast, expressed his distress. "I realise the death penalty is popular among a lot of people," Mr Cuomo said. "But remember that 90 per cent of the people once approved of slavery."

But Moses Sims, the brother of Jerome, was clearly jubilant. Asked if he would like the chance to attend Harris's execution, he said, "Yeah. Without a doubt. I really could do that."



Charlton Heston - pictured here in a scene from his film *Alaska* - says shooting is 'a wholesome sport, an American tradition'

Heston the hunter has Bill Clinton in his sights

THE National Rifle Association, one of America's most powerful lobbies, is sounding just a little nervous as it meets for its annual convention, writes Andrew Marshall in Washington.

Charlton Heston, who is expected to become the group's new president, used a speech

on Saturday to lay into the President. "Mr Clinton, sir," the 73-year-old former actor said in his best oratorical style, "Americans didn't trust you with our health care systems and we didn't trust you with gays in the military and we don't trust you with our 21-year-old daughters. We sure ... don't trust you with

our guns." But even Heston acknowledged that the group had come to be perceived as extreme. He said that if elected, he would try to take it back to the mainstream. Shooting was "a wholesome sport, an American tradition, a rite of passage."

With a solid bedrock of

support among its 3.5 million-strong membership, the NRA has not had much to worry about before. But in the past few years, an uneasy chorus has arisen over shooting incidents.

The school shootings in Arkansas and Oregon have sparked fresh outrage at the consequences of the wide-

spread availability of guns. Speaking in Massachusetts on Friday, Attorney General Janet Reno warned that if America does not learn to grow up about guns, then the killings will continue. "We have got to let our young people know that there is a consequence to firing a gun," she said.

Kim presses US for more open approach to North Korea

WASHINGTON (AP) — Weeks after India and Pakistan triggered fears of a South Asian nuclear arms race, a major ally in Asia is coming to see President Bill Clinton bring in worries about a nation whose nuclear ambitions create a military crisis four years

ago - North Korea. The South Korean President Kim Dae-jung is expected to caution Mr Clinton in talks tomorrow that avoiding another confrontation on the Korean Peninsula may depend on a new, more open American approach to the North Korean regime.

Mr Kim took office in February as the first opposition figure to win the presidency in half a century and faces an acute economic crisis at home. But he sees this as an opportune moment for new paths to reconciliation with the North - a goal he has chased for decades. The

meeting will be his first with Mr Clinton.

The South Korean leader is expected to tell Mr Clinton that it is time to loosen punitive sanctions hampering Western trade with the communist North to encourage dialogue, expose the North to the benefits of free

enterprise and move it towards a softening of its hostile attitude toward the South. He briefed the United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, on his ideas on Saturday.

"It would be desirable for the United States to ease its economic sanctions on North

Korea," Mr Kim said in an interview with the *New York Times* last week in Seoul. "I think this would be more effective in efforts to get North Korea to open up and liberalise."

Clinton administration officials have said little publicly about the suggestion. The White

House press secretary, Mike McCurry, said Mr Clinton looks forward to tomorrow's meeting to consult and exchange views on promoting peace.

Some prominent US think-tanks share Mr Kim's view. The Council on Foreign Relations, where Mr Kim was speak-

ing yesterday, issued a report recently saying that the US government needs to move more quickly to expand contacts with the North and offer more economic inducements. It recommended "modest adjustments" to, but not the lifting of, US sanctions.

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Photograph: Glynn Griffiths

Growing pains (at 32)



DEBORAH
ROSS
TALKS TO
JAMES BROWN

The Cumberland Hotel, Marble Arch,
London, 7pm

James Brown - creator of *Loaded*, but now editor of *GQ* - is here to give a talk to the Jewish Young Business Group. Nice Jewish boys with stuck-on name labels that say "Jonathan Bloom, Textiles" or "Daniel Gottlieb, Jewellery". James is spectacularly nervous. "I've done a lot of public speaking," he says, "but only down the pub."

James is surprisingly dainty. Indeed, for someone who has figured so hugely in the whole L.A. thing he is, in fact, almost feminine. Sweet little springs, dark curls. Quite a pretty face. Small feet, although he won't tell me what size. ("Cos that's the most rubbish question I've ever been asked!")

And girlish hands that, tonight, shake. He's offered a drink - "wine, James?" - but must decline. He gave up drinking and doing drugs, on 31 January, having finally decided "it wasn't really very glamorous, going round being sick down yourself all the time."

Why is he here tonight? Because, he says, he was asked, which, yes, was flattering. Plus the £20 ticket price goes to Jewish Care, a charity. "And

it's nice to do things for people, you know, and help them."

James Brown is, I think, really trying to grow up. Sometimes, it's like you can almost hear this stretching and creaking sound as he tries to pull himself out of an adolescence that has probably lasted since he was 14 until now. (He's 32.) Often, he fails.

"Do you shag her, then?" is his favourite query to mates. He may, even, be insufficiently equipped to succeed. Maturity isn't something he ever saw coming. "I gotta tell you, I never thought I'd be here at this age. I always thought live fast, die young, leave a good-looking obituary. I thought, what's the point?" And now?

"You can't keep living the way you've always lived. I've lived with mice and stuff! It's not good for your soul. Drugs destroy your soul. You gotta accommodate new stuff. A mortgage. Sharing your life." I don't know if James Brown can ever become a full adult. But he's giving it a go which, considering who he is and what he's come to stand for, is splendidly brave in many ways.

You may rate *Loaded*. You may despise it. Whatever, it would be unwise, I think, to underestimate it as either a cultural or publishing phenomenon.

Founded by James for IPC in 1994, and only expected to sell around 40,000 copies a month, it is now pushing the 500,000 mark. In many ways, you can understand its success. It was the first lifestyle glossy that wasn't aspirational. It was, pretty much, about being useless and messing up. It may even be a celebration of being useless and messing up.

OK, it was for hokes and, OK, it was mostly about sex and drink and drugs and football and getting as much of all of them as possible, but it could also be funny and clever. It makes me laugh more than any other magazine apart from *Hello!* But

I hate it because the behaviour it glamorises has absolutely no value in the long run.

James may have discovered this. Certainly, he thinks he has: "I've slept by the sides of roads and stuff, and it's 'orrible really. You think it's funny at the time. You go back to *Loaded* and tell everyone you got off with this woman and had to sleep on a grass verge and get more drugs in... but if you're an addict, as I am, it just wrings it all out of you and doesn't leave you with much left." Things came to a head, funnily enough, not at *Loaded*, but at *GQ* when, after a particularly long lunch, he ended up rowing with someone and throwing a champagne bottle out of the window. The window shattered, the bottle hit a parked car. Anyone out there could have been badly hurt, and the incident frightened James. It is one thing to destroy yourself, but another to take others with you. "Maybe we all have our own gutters," says James, "and I recognise mine."

His reign at *GQ* has not been as spectacular as envisioned. Brought in nine months ago to pep up a title that had grown staid, he's achieved little beyond a certain Loadification. I suggest, perhaps, that he hasn't been able to give *GQ* a new, strong identity, because he himself has yet to develop a new, strong identity. He disputes this hotly. "I'm not changing. I'm just taking all the junk off, and becoming who I am."

Who are you James? "A hoke who likes reading and music and sex and football." It might not have been wise to hand over a magazine that's meant to be post-*Loaded* to a bloke who isn't post-*Loaded* yet himself.

Anyway, he gives his talk to the Jewish businessmen. He is utterly engaging. There is teenage despair: "As a 19-year-old, I was a sort of unemployable cross between Arthur Scargill and Bart Simpson." There

is triumph: "When I created *Loaded*, people would come up to me in the street to say, 'James, it's the best magazine ever.'" The Davids and Jonathans clap enthusiastically. We depart.

"Phew!" he says in the cab. Then, it is: "Was I alright? Was I? Was I?" He can appear quite vulnerable at times.

The next day, I meet James again, this time at the *GQ* office in Vogue House in the posh part of the West End of London. Topics for discussion here this morning include contemporary feminism in Western Europe, nuclear arms testing in India and whether the cost of subscribing to *Which?* is offset by what you save on making sure you don't buy a rubbish hedge trimmer. No, only joking. It's Geri Spice ("She'll be fronting a crap travel show in two years"); Gazza ("a fat prat") and Brenda Schadt, the latest Wonderbra model and *GQ*'s cover girl for July. "BLOODY GORGEOUS". I ask James who the perfect *GQ* woman is. He says: "Any beautiful woman beautifully shot. I won't give you no rubbish about that."

He is very pleased to be working for the Condé Nast publishing empire. The smartness of it all makes him almost childishly happy. He says: "C'mon, I want to show you something." We descend staircase after staircase. This building houses not only *GQ*, but also Condé Nast's other posh glossies - *Vogue*, *Tatler*, *Vanity Fair*, *World of Interiors*, etc. We pass a lot of ascending, frighteningly pretty Condé Nast babes in little skirts. Satisfyingly, James does ogle, yes. But, as he says, he just can't help it. He wouldn't "get off" with any of them, though. "I'm married, like."

He married Caz, a trainee English teacher, last year. He met Caz in a club, and liked her straight off. "She was different. She cares about

people, not where the next line is coming from." Then, because he just can't resist it: "She also has great tits."

They live in Islington, in a house said to be worth £350,000. Mostly, he says, marriage is brilliant. "Shall I tell you the difference between being married and not married? My electricity works. My phone works. I don't dress off the floor. My car has petrol in it. I know that if I set off somewhere I'm going to get there. My house doesn't have mice. My house is full of wine bottles, but they are full and in boxes, not splattered around the living-room..."

Still, it's hard being true. "The thing is, right, women have expectations that men can't fulfil." Like? "Being faithful. It's hard. You meet this bird, right, and you have a bit of a flirt, but you can't get off with her, because you are married, so it's not the same." Perhaps it's not men who can't be faithful, it's just you? "Nah. I've got married mates, and they say the same." What does your wife think about this? "She's very relaxed about it." Relaxed about it saying you can't be faithful? "I'm not making a frank admission here. I'm speaking figuratively, in the long term." Feeling like this, why on earth did you bother to get married then? "Because I love Caz," he replies, astounded I need even ask. Also, though, he might have wanted to be looked after a bit.

No, they are not about to have a family. Caz is keen, but he isn't. He could have had a kid when he was 16. He lost his virginity on the night of his 16th birthday and "I got a sexual disease and she got pregnant in the space of three minutes". The baby was aborted.

He remains and about that. "But, you know, I was in the fifth form... it would have had a crap life." Tears gather speedily in his eyes. Does he find he cries more easily these days? Yes, he does. "I've always been a very

passionate, emotional person, but for a long time I was putting on this white, Colombian overcoat and it wasn't letting much out."

He sees a drugs counsellor, and often cries during the sessions. "I'm going through a lot. I'm going through all the things which, over the years, I've hid behind the drink and the drugs. I'm going through my mother's death, my parents' separation, the fights I've had, the women I've split up with, all the bad behaviour. It's not like I'm blubbing all the time, but there's a lot of unresolved stuff I have to work through."

James was born and brought up in Leeds. His mother, Sue, was a secretary while his father, Ray, is "a political travel writer" whatever that might be. He was always closer to his mum, "who was good and kind and everything a mother should be". She died some years ago and, he says, he still misses her horribly.

But his childhood was, in the main, happy. Things only started to go wrong when he was 14 and his parents decided to separate, at which point he took to drinking cider in the park, because of "the pain". Although precociously clever, he jacked in school after his O levels because the pain had transmuted into a sense of alienation.

He joined CND, went on political marches, then started producing fanzines and travelling with bands. He got into drinking proper here. "I didn't know how bad I was until I met someone recently who knew me back then and said, 'I remember you. You were always drunk in the back of the van.'"

He came to London to work for the *NME*, but packed it in when they didn't make him editor. Always totally ambitious, he couldn't take it.

IPC rang him out of the blue to ask if he'd launch a new title for them. *Loaded* was his idea. "I wanted to create a magazine that was for

me and my friends, and an extension of my personality."

We finally reach our destination at Vogue House - the underground car-park. He has three cars down here. A Jeep (his company car), a BMW convertible (his) and an Audi (on loan). "Gorgeous cars, James," I enthuse. He gets cross. Apparently, I am missing the point entirely. "Look! Look!" And then I see it, a plaque with "James Brown" hanging over the spaces. "A reserved space! A reserved space! I never got that at IPC." James's identity might not be as sure as he imagines.

Our last meeting takes place at lunchtime the next day, at a lunch in Condé Nast's private dining-room for some of James's writers at *GQ*. The food is asparagus, salmon, cheeses, and fat, glossy fruit. The crockery is Thomas Goode; the cutlery thick, heavy silver. "This is mature, isn't it?" insists James.

There are 12 of us. Mostly, it's *Loaded* blokes. The conversation takes in more shagging plus a lot of reminiscing from *Loaded* times. James participates with some energy, but not wholeheartedly. He's a bit like a man tap-dancing around a high note - the note where the drugs and drink and the fighting and chucking stuff used to be. It isn't comfortable for him. Mostly, I think he's frightened.

James declares he's off for a massage at his health club. Certainly, he's put a lot of work in over the last three days. At one point, he went over to a sun's desk and captioned a photograph of a woman on a pony. "Nice Ass," he wrote. Perhaps, on too of everything else he is working on, this really was quite a thing to do.

Perhaps one day, he'll just up back into everything he is now trying to give up. Perhaps he is just a one-trick pony, although, being as smart as he is, I hope not.



Sekina Khan and Mohammed Bashir
Photograph: NTI

A hard lesson for the Asian community to learn

THIS is a story which reveals the complexity, pain and confusion of migrant life. Last Friday Sekina Khan and Mohammed Bashir were jailed for the unlawful kidnapping of their daughter Rehana.

She was a university-educated woman who refused a forced marriage and then (perhaps to punish her parents) went her own rebellious way, for a time even living with a drug dealer. They tried, but failed, to persuade her to change her mind. In the end they spiked her drink at a funeral and attempted to smuggle her away to Pakistan. She realised what was going on and raised the alarm.

Each year there are over two-hundred cases of British girls being taken off to India, Pakistan or Bangladesh either under false pretences or terrible duress and coerced into marriages. The Foreign Office has placed leaflets at airports giving these young women basic information about their rights in order to deal

with this epidemic - which usually reaches a peak about now, just before the main school exams and the long summer vacation. In Bangladesh these girls can be put into prisons if they raise objections and in Pakistan there is anecdotal evidence that a number of these young women have committed suicide.

Recently an Asian teacher of two 14-year-old girls at a British school told me how they had been imprisoned in a cellar for months and how the police and local council were worried about "interfering" in their culture.

Last week a white woman rang in tears to tell me about her daughter's best friend, who had cut her arms to shreds in protest against a marriage in Bangladesh. As one of only two (I think) Asian women writing in the mainstream press, I get hundreds of such phone calls and letters. They ask me for help I cannot give them and it breaks me up.

So do I believe that the parents jailed

last week are monsters, as the tabloid press would have us believe? Not at all.

Sekina and Mohammed are, by all accounts, decent folk who love their children. They have a corner shop in Bradford which makes relentless demands on their time and energy. Like many other immigrants, they thought this sacrifice was all that was needed to make a good life. They also believed that the children would appreciate this and not be seduced by the ways of the West and that they would all carry on happy ever after as if they had never left that spot in the sub-continent which is still home in their hearts.

But the children changed, became more individualistic and self-aware. Most have not become westernised in any crude sense, but nor are they like their parents used to be.

Many Asian families accept and even rejoice in this. Others, however, have turned cruel, violent and as this case shows, even resorted to criminal means

in order to recapture something that has long gone. Some religious and community leaders have encouraged these responses instead of enabling parents such as Mohammed and Sekina, many of whom are illiterate and easily led, to manage and understand the inevitable changes in their lives.

What is even more disturbing is that because they are not getting supportive parenting, many of the young girls, especially the bright ones, are making choices which would alarm even libertarians such as Hanif Kureshi. Rehana chose a drug dealer, other girls I know have shackled up with ex-convicts, home-owners and barely educated morons. They do it because they know no better. The parents are locked in the same hall of ignorance and fear.

Two things might provide an answer to these deep problems. One is the law and this is why the verdict is so important. As law abiding people with an over-

developed sense of shame, such judgements will begin a process of education among the Asian community which is long overdue.

Those who claim such judgements are racist are now a minority. Secondly, the laudable step taken by the European Human Rights Convention means that there is now a much more solid and fundamental framework to address these thorny issues.

The battle is no longer between their ways and ours. Protecting women such as Rehana is the enactment of a fundamental human right which we will all have to accept.

One can only hope that community leaders will use this opportunity to enlighten themselves and those in their flock so that we can stop this destruction of our own young ones.

Yasmin Alibhai-Brown

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So, who should replace the Lords?

WHAT? Are they still there? Those hereditary peers whose role in framing our laws, Tony Blair assured us, was so laughably anachronistic that it had to be disposed of at once? Well, the new government did have a lot on last year. There was youth unemployment, Northern Ireland, health, education – and it is already getting it in the oock for a somewhat relaxed definition of “early” delivery in respect of those last two pledges. Besides, it was worth pausing a while to work out what, once the hereditaries were abolished, should be put in their place.

However, it seems that the Government has given up trying to come up with a plan for a reformed Upper House and has decided to stick with Plan A: kick out the hereditary peers and... er, that's it. There will be 30 extra Labour life peers to level the score with the Conservatives, and an independent commission to award future peerages, but essentially the House will remain exactly as it is now, without the winners of the inheritance lottery.

Mr Blair knew that the other end of the Palace of Westminster was a dark and undy place, booby-trapped with Unintended Consequences, so he put off going in there with his oew broom. But he has gained ootling by more than a year's delay – and certainly not, as William Hague made clear yesterday, the agreement of the Tories (always a forlorn hope).

Mr Blair should have cleared out the hereditaries straight away: then there would have been less of a threat to his legislative timetable from noble Tory obstructionism. He could later have sought to entangle the Tories in the thickets of the difficult question: what next? Instead, he has allowed the Tories to pot that question to him, demanding to know what he will put in the hereditaries' place. The Prime Minister's problem is that he does not know. He would, we suspect, be quite happy with the “huge quango” that Mr Hague mocked yesterday. And Lord Irvine, who chairs the cabinet committee on Lords reform, has failed to come up with a more democratic plan.

The Labour Party used to be committed to a “directly elected second chamber”, but Mr Blair has accepted, piecemeal, the argument that there should be room in the second chamber for judges, bishops and people appointed on “merit”. But he never asked what a second chamber should be for. Its only worthwhile functions at present are to act as a technical legislative revising committee, and as a forum for retired statespersons to recall their grievances in tranquillity. For those purposes, a super-quango is adequate. But when there is so much wrong with our democracy, especially the Lower House's unwillingness to hold the Government to account, there must be room for greater expression of the popular will.

The abolition of hereditary legislators is better late than never, but still only completes half of the unfinished business from the Asquith government's Parliament Act, 1911, which promised a “second chamber constituted on a popular instead of a hereditary basis”.

Zero tolerance deserves a fair trial

THE LABOUR PARTY, in its oewish guise as the party of law and order, is seeking to lend substance to the idea of “zero tolerance” policing. It is out a mere slogan. It has contributed to – or at the very least accompanied – a dramatic reduction in crime in New York. The idea is that, if you crack down on petty crime – litter, vandalism, threatening behaviour – then rates of theft, rape and murder come down too. It has been tried, over short periods, in Hartlepool and Middlesbrough. But it is a controversial policy.

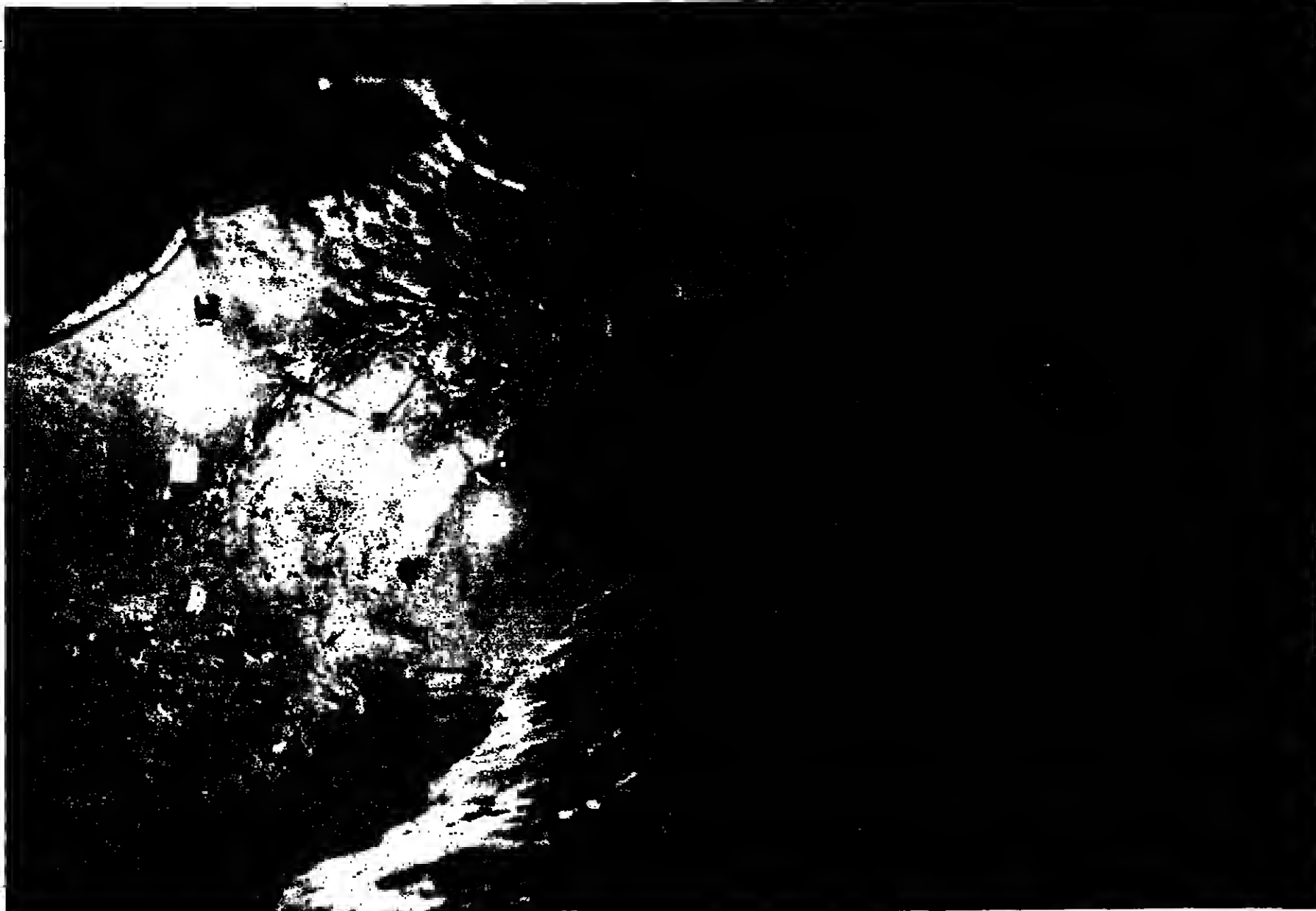
Some of the arguments against it are specious. It is said that it could provoke disorder in areas like Brixton where relations between the police and local communities have been fraught. That is tantamount to saying that crimes in some areas should be treated more leniently than in others. But some objections should be taken seriously. Zero tolerance could distort priorities, requiring police to devote more resources to petty crime at the expense of less visible offences such as fraud. The Association of Chief Police Officers, with an obvious truncheon to grind, points out that the New York policy was implemented by 7,000 additional officers.

There is also a danger that zero tolerance can be taken too far. Mayor Giuliani in New York is now pursuing “minus-zero tolerance”, requiring the NYPD to intervene in cases of rudeness or loudness – to police public manners. This chimes with Jack Straw's hard line on antisocial behaviour, but his own son's brush with the law illustrates the difficulty. Mr Straw whisked him to the local police station: a good example of zero tolerance. But who could argue that selling small amounts of cannabis in pubs should be a police priority? As for more blatantly offensive behaviour, it takes more than police action to prevent youths swearing and spitting at bus stops.

“Zero tolerance” requires more flexibility than the absolute enforcement of all known legislation implies. But as a simple message, that public space should be respected and citizens should behave considerately, it is a sound basis for policy. It marks clearly the top of the slippery slope, so that action can more easily be taken to stop young people sliding down it.

Panic in the ranks

THREE-QUARTERS of British troops refused to have their anti-anthrax jabs despite a campaign to persuade them to do so by George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, and military top brass, who were pierced publicly in an attempt to show the vaccine was safe. This proves two things. One, politicians' photo-opportunities do not reassure people (remember Cordelia Gummer's beefburger). Two, our armed services consist largely of men. It wasn't fears about Gulf War Syndrome, it was terror of needles.



Cave-dwellers: a curator, Mark Lodwick, inspecting recently completed archaeological work at Pontnewydd Caves, near St Asaph, believed to be oldest site of human occupation in Wales. Photograph: Iolo Williams

Anger at student loans

Sir: Your leading article (6 June) is right to say that the Government's proposals for higher education funding are “flawed and incoherent”, so it is astonishing that you go on to claim a backbench rebellion is “misguided and unjustified”.

You fail to point out that the maintenance grant, which the Government is abolishing, is only paid to those students from the poorest backgrounds. In addition, increased debt will hit women and ethnic minorities disproportionately. Black students face the prospect of leaving higher education with a disproportionately greater chance of being unemployed. In addition, no one has said how the proposals will deal with those who will not take out debt for religious, ethical or cultural reasons.

You are right to say linking student support to parental income is wrong in principle. Lesbian, gay and bisexual students often use college as the first opportunity to “come out” about their sexuality. Thousands find parental contributions cease, once they have told their parents.

Even if MPs think these proposals are objectionable, but necessary to solve the funding crisis, they should consider the fact that they won't. The funding gap will be at least £3.2bn by 2000/01. The Government's proposals raise at best £1.7bn. ESTHER WATERS, President, DANIEL BLANEY, External Officer, King's College Cambridge Student Union

Sir: Today (8 June) the Government intends to scrap grants and introduce tuition fees for higher education. This will price a university degree at over £15,000, a debt well beyond consideration for millions of people. We urge MPs, most of whom have benefited from a student grant, to oppose these proposals. We have the public support of well over 60 MPs and of the bulk of the student population. If MPs do vote for this attack, the rebellion that may take place in the Commons (report, 4 June) will

look like a picnic compared to the rebellion in the streets and colleges when colleges start back next term. KATE BUCKELL, Chair, Campaign for Free Education, University of Paisley, Strathclyde

Sir: I am an NHS GP and would not be here if it were not for free university education. Removing taxpayers' support for students removes from the degree-holder any obligation to his fellows and further destroys this selfish society. Every day I remember that taxpayers paid for my education and it helps me accept the low pay and poor working conditions we all put up with in the NHS. DR JOHN LALOR, Portsmouth

Sir: Of the thirty members of my Rotary club, which has to be constituted so that each active member represents a different business, six are graduates, and almost all earn less than the twenty who left school at 15 or 16 and went into building, insurance, accountancy, haulage, estate agencies, quantity surveying etc etc. TREVOR PLUNKETT, Norwich

Sir: If, as you say, graduates earn more (leading article, 6 June), they will pay more tax: “those who benefit” from higher education must be society as a whole, which is going to oeed good, highly trained brains – or why are we educating them at all? JENNY FOWLER, Woking, Surrey

Quarries and landscapes

Sir: As a lover of the Peak District, and a manager working within the quarrying industry, I was disappointed by your report “The good versus the bad and ugly” (1 June).

I am well aware of the intrusion our business makes to the Peak District scenery, irrespective of whether the quarry lies inside or outside the National Park boundary. However, quarrying is an inevitable price society must pay, as the products we produce underpin every aspect of our lives.

Quarrying is a temporary use of land (even though temporary can mean many decades), and modern restoration techniques often mean that the industry returns land to the wider community in an improved ecological state. The comparison with the permanent use of “green field” sites for housing or road construction is deeply misleading.

Eldon Hill quarry is well over 100 years old and predates the formation of the Peak District National Park. RMC, the latest in a long line of owners, were prevented from carrying out a quality restoration of Eldon Hill by the refusal of the short period of extension of its life, which would have made that restoration possible. DAVID JONES, Buxton, Derbyshire

Sir: Your report about government funding for Minerals 98 (“Whitehall funds hid to stop quarry tax”, 1 June) is worrying news, which will be greeted with anger by the thousands of local people from Scotland to Cornwall who are desperately trying to protect their communities from the ravages of an unsustainable and environmentally destructive industry.

A quarrying tax would not only bring significant environmental benefits: it would be good for the economy as well. Recent research by Friends of the Earth and Forum for the Future showed that a tax of £1 per tonne rising to £13 per tonne by 2010 would directly create 4,000 new jobs by 2010 because of the shift in aggregates production from quar-

LETTERS

Post letters to Letters to the Editor and include a daytime telephone number
Fax 0171 293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Channel rail link

Sir: Why is John Prescott proposing to give £2.5bn of public money to a private company to build a high-speed rail link to the Channel Tunnel? Your report today (3 June) (“BA wins race for high-speed tunnel rail link”) gives the reasons.

“Britain has had to watch enviously as its Eurostar partners, France and Belgium, have had trains running at 186mph following the completion of their high-speed links.”

“Ministers were keen that... there should be no further hitches in the prestige plan.”

So much for hard choices. So much for Gordon Brown's insistence that all Government services, including transport, should benefit the poor.

The issues raised go beyond the waste of public money and environmental damage to London and Kent, important though those things are. This project has got so far only because of the failure of various committees in the last parliament to scrutinise it properly. If this failure is repeated, the credibility and reputation of our parliamentary institutions will once more suffer.

Parliament must now insist on a full statement, with all the supporting calculations, of the benefits which the Government claims the taxpayer will derive from this investment. There must be no hiding behind “commercial confidentiality”.

Parliament should also demand a detailed environmental appraisal. STEPHEN FLOWDEN, London NW1

Holidays without banks
Sir: With the announcement of additional Bank Holidays for the Millennium, wouldn't it be a good time to drop that archaic term and call them, as others do, National Holidays? Already, the former hallowed position of banks is disappearing behind unmanned areas with terminals and cash dispensers. This is bound to develop further with telephone and Internet banking. J S JONES, Lytham, Lancashire

The rest of the time being Barry Norman was spent writing scripts and talking to camera and doing mistakes and all the other dreary things that make television such an exciting place to work. A few weeks later I had the shock of my life. They offered me the job full-time. Whether the job had previously been offered to Aitken, Brown and Worsnip, I don't know, but after thinking that this could be my big break, I started asking myself if I really wanted to spend half my life late at night in Soho viewing theatres, or if I wanted to be as recognisable as Barry Norman. (I had once travelled on a train with Barry Norman, and was aghast at the way everyone treated him as an old friend.) So I said “no” to the big time and they finally decided to replace Barry Norman with Barry Norman. Good choice.

And oow they're looking for someone new. Well, thanks, chaps, but no thanks. Tiy Tina Brown. She sounds as if she's due for a change.

I was wrong. At one point I turned round to ask for the volume to be turned up, and there was nobody there. The projectionist had slipped out for a fag, or to go to the loo, or to escape from the depressing mixture of Prussian monasticism and German thoroughness. So perhaps it was only me that ever saw this film in England...

I didn't see the Proust film in a West End cinema – well, I did go to the West End to see it, but it was late at night in a tiny viewing theatre in Soho. There were maybe ten seats. The BBC director was due to accompany me to see the film, but she cried off at the last moment, so I saw it all alone, apart from the projectionist hidden in his black box behind me, and I remember thinking at one point, as Proust chatted to his maid or to a visiting string quartet (chatting, unnerveingly, in German) that maybe this film would only ever be seen in England by me and the projectionist.

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But equally clearly I remember the low-budget, hopeless, foreign films that a presenter of Film ‘81 or Film ‘98 has to go and see. Not hopeless in the sense of bad, but in the sense of having no hope of hitting the big time, or even the West End. There was a German film about Nazi Germany, showing what it was like to be an ordinary hloke promoted to be the commandant of a concentration camp (good film, I thought) and another German film about what it was like to be the elderly Marcel

Proust, drowning in a sea of memory (also good but extremely boring).

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MILES KINGDON

WHEN I WAS on the staff of *Punch* in the 1970s, one of our regular writers was Barry Norman, a columnist for the *Daily Mail* across the road. Often he would spring lithely over the road, deliver copy and spring back again. But one day the spring had gone out of his step. His feet dragged, and his eyes were dull.

“I’ve been fired by the *Mail*,” he said. “What on earth is an out-of-work hack going to do?”

Be staggeringly successful front man for a BBC film programme, it turned out. “Best thing that ever happened to me, being fired,” he used to say. And now finally he has moved on again, away from the BBC to where the Sky is the limit.

And yet this is not the first time that Barry Norman has resigned as the BBC film pundit. Back in the very early 1980s he decided that it was about time his career took a turn away from film punditry and he accepted the chance to be frontman for one of BBC TV's cultural heavyweights. So off

he went, leaving the chair marked BARRY NORMAN, Film Arbiter empty behind him. I remember this well, not because Barry's departure caused that much fuss at the time, but because I was one of the four people auditioned to replace him.

Yes, auditioned. The BBC was so uncertain how to fill the Barry Norman slot that they didn't choose a replacement and stick with it – they actually got a shortlist of contenders to make three programmes each and put them out on air, to see how they performed on screen. The way I remember it, there were four of us, two men and two women. There was Maria Aitken and Tina Brown, Glyn Worsnip and myself, and each of us in turn went off to look at new films and report back to the nation.

And that is how I can vouchsafe that there is nothing glamorous about being Barry Norman. You may get to meet a star once in a while (I didn't) but most of the time you just slog round watching films at silly hours. I remember rushing off one

morning to a vast cinema in the West End to see a preview of the newly arrived *Mad Max*, and being shaken out of my skin by the huge noise and the vast screen, which seemed almost as large as the Australian outback filling it. (I had no idea what to say about *Mad Max*, which wasn't like any film I had ever seen, more like a strip cartoon brought to life. I later found that there hadn't ever been a film like *Mad Max* before, and that the director, George Miller, was mad about strip cartoons.)

But equally clearly I remember the low-budget, hopeless, foreign films that a presenter of Film ‘81 or Film ‘98 has to go and see. Not hopeless in the sense of bad, but in the sense of having no hope of hitting the big time, or even the West End. There was a German film about Nazi Germany, showing what it was like to be an ordinary hloke promoted to be the commandant of a concentration camp (good film, I thought) and another German film about what it was like to be the elderly Marcel

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Don't kill American trash TV, manure nourishes rare blooms



TOM SUTCLIFFE

A CAUTIONARY tale first of all. Some time in the late Seventies the Dutch government decided that it would be a good idea to support native talent. A guaranteed purchase arrangement was instituted for Dutch artists – a practical way of ensuring that government patronage was not diverted into gin or Afghan Gold, at least not until some creative labour had been undertaken.

If the artist made the work, the government pledged to act as a purchaser of last resort, should others fail to recognise its merit. Removed from the philistine vagaries of the market, Dutch artists would be freed to do their best work. Unfortunately, the Dutch soon found themselves with an art mountain – warehouses of mediocre canvases which no one else would buy or in deed even pay to look at. Only if they have since used them as filler material in a land reclamation scheme could this well-intentioned programme be said to have expanded Holland's standing in the world.

I am reminded of this exemplary lesson in unintended consequences by our report today that Chris Smith, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, is minded to be a little more vigilant about implementing EC quota requirements with regard to imported television programmes (meaning, to all intents and purposes, American television programmes).

As it happens there's no great alarm here – most terrestrial broadcasters comfortably exceed the requirement that more than half of all transmissions should be of European origin and, while cable and satellite channels don't, many of those are moving in the right direction. This is entirely desirable as long as it is voluntary, but there are strong arguments to suggest that the current relaxed policy is by far the most sensible (the directive has a spacious loophole in the words "where practicable and by appropriate means").

There are three broad lines of attack against any stringently imposed cultural quota: the patriotic, the practical and the philosophical. The first may sound rather paradoxical. After all, what could be more patriotic than an attempt to defend the national genius against the stealthy, almost undetectable corruptions of transatlantic culture?

To listen to some people you would think that American programming was a kind of cultural carbon monoxide – before you know it British culture has slipped into unconsciousness in front of the set, a coma from which it will never recover. But it just isn't British to take such steps; for one thing we've always had a miscegenated, mongrel culture, whether it looked to the Mediterranean past with the classics or to more recent transatlantic influences. It isn't British – it's French. It smacks of petty Gallic bookkeeping which counts how

many English pop-songs have been played on Radio Clermont-Ferrand and then sends in *les culture flies* to enforce a 24-hour Johnny Halliday festival. And we all know how effective such policing has been in turning France into a power on the international music scene.

The practical objection comes in two parts. First, that it just isn't easy to enforce such cultural dirigisme in an age of satellite and cable broadcasts. Already Sky television has demonstrated that it can use the best quality American products to secure the sort of steady allegiance that terrestrial channels enjoy through simple inertia (my own resolution to cancel a cable subscription has repeatedly been foiled by the knowledge that at 7pm every weekday, should I need it, I can get a bit of Homer Simpson). Second, I think we should inspect closely claims that we would lose only the trashier elements of American programming under a strictly applied system. If we fill the resulting hole in the schedules with top-quality European products, then it will be the more expensive buy-ins that go. If, on the other hand, British stations are to meet the quota with cheap, low-quality programmes, there seems little point to the initiative.

The philosophical reason is that there is no more point to a bureaucratically managed culture than in a tract of rainforest run as if it were a municipal park. Cultural resurgence and vitality occur in unpredictable ways and, besides, rare blooms are often nourished by manure. The French offer another telling example here, this time an admirable one. Probably the most influential French cultural export in the second half of this century has been French New Wave film – a disparate group of directors who, for a time at least,

A national culture that needs legislation to stay alive isn't worth having

made the idea of the art film and French cinema virtually synonymous. The energy and freshness of their vision affected other filmmakers in all kinds of ways. That influence can still be seen in the best of American cinema, which had its own genius reflected back to it in a way it could never have recognised. But that explosion of talent grew out of a contempt for the domestic French film industry and a passion for the most disregarded products of Hollywood B-movies which would have been the very first victims of a quota system.

If you want a British example, that's easy too – the explosion of British bands in the Sixties drew their inspiration almost entirely from American music, reshaping it so that it couldn't be anything but British, and triumphantly took it back to where it had come from.

In short, a national culture that needs legislation to stay alive isn't worth having. There are many things governments can and should do to make it easier for British talent to compete. They can examine tax breaks and investment incentives. They should address the stranglehold of the big American companies on the distribution system for films. But a quota system is intrinsically flawed – it diminishes the competition artificially, and that can only enfeeble a culture, not invigorate it.

Ulster's Blairites: how Sinn Fein is turning from Armalites to Armani



KIM SENGUPTA

AFTER the collapse of a previous round of peace talks in Northern Ireland, Gerry Adams claims he found himself stripped naked in a cell at the RUC police station in Castle-reagh. He says that, as he was being kicked into unconsciousness, he could hear one of his attackers shouting: "All bets are off now, Gerry."

Whatever the veracity of the tale, the account seems now to belong to a different world. As the "Yes" campaigners celebrated the 22 May referendum result, Mr Adams slipped away to talk on the phone to Bill Clinton, Tony Blair and Bertie Aherm. It was not thought to be anything special or unusual.

Sinn Fein is on the threshold of respectable politics thanks to a combination of bloody-minded pragmatism and sly adroitness. In Belfast the oft-repeated consensus is that Sinn Fein is well ahead of the game. The party is "on message", controlled and tough, New Labour with knobs on. "No wonder Tony Blair gets on so well with them," one exasperated Ulster Unionist activist said. The stage management of the last Sinn Fein *And-Heels* in Duhlin could easily have been a Millbank Production. The leadership got the backing they wanted for the "Yes" vote. "Nobody said it was going to be hard," was one comment.

It is no secret that Mr Adams is a fan of Mr Blair. Just as New Labour has evolved from what was perceived as hard doctrinaire socialism, Sinn Fein has softened its edges and its uncompromising demands for Irish unification.

In the process, there have been marked changes, not least to Mr Adams, a former barman, and to his Sinn Fein colleague Martin McGuinness, a former butcher's apprentice. The makeover has been gradual and increasingly stylish. In December 1994 the Sinn Fein leaders were observed turning up in their "Sunday best" for a Stormont meeting following the last cease-fire.



Gerry Adams has set aside his polytechnic lecturer look of 1994. Meanwhile, Martin McGuinness no longer looks like a balted singer, having packed away his Christmas jumper. Four years later (above), both republicans have opted for the sharp-suited look of the Labour Government.



Mr McGuinness was wearing a blue blazer and grey slacks. Mr Adams had just been persuaded by Sinn Fein's spin doctors to wear ties with his tweed jackets.

Nowadays, both are impeccably tailored. Mr Adams prefers, one assumes for aesthetic rather than doctrinaire reasons, the more unstructured Italian look to Savile Row. In Belfast and Derry there are affectionate jokes about "do-cough Armani" ("do-cough ar la" is the Gaelic Republican slogan, meaning "our day will come"), and during his latest trip to New York Mr Adams wondered whether he should be charging Armani for all the free publicity he was giving them.

There is, however, a calculated ruthlessness behind the style. Again there are parallels with New Labour. Sinn Fein believes in very rapid rebuttal at press conferences. Critical questions are stamped on to discourage the others. "What have you got to say about the IRA's refusal to decommission Mr Adams?" is answered with "Is that the best you can do? Let

me say this is rather a pathetic question..." If you shut your eyes and adjust the accent control it could just be our Mr Alastair Campbell.

And it's not just the leaders who are on message. At the referendum count at Belfast's King's Hall, the bearded Sinn Fein minders were armed with earpieces and walkie talkies, much like security service and Special Branch guards who had accompanied Mr Clinton and Mr Blair. A police officer rolled his eyes and smiled.

Mr Adams likes to strike a statesmanlike pose. In victory, he was magnanimous, saying the Unionists have as many rights as the Nationalists, offering the hand of co-operation and friendship. While Ian Paisley ranted and raved at rallies across Northern Ireland, talking about conspiracy and betrayal and outside interference, Mr Adams and Mr McGuinness were meeting Cyril Ramaphosa of the ANC. When Mr Adams went off to vote (in a charcoal-grey single-breasted number) he was accompanied by another

visiting diplomat, the Namibian High Commissioner.

That weekend the "Yes" campaigners celebrated. At one party, John Hume and a few old friends sang "We Shall Overcome" in the memory of the civil war marches of the late Sixties. At another, David Ervine, the former Loyalist paramilitary who has become an extremely impressive politician sang "Memories". The Sinn Fein apparitions were, however, hard at work over the weekend. On Bank Holiday Monday, while others were still nursing their hangovers, the party launched its election campaign with a press conference. The journalists were casually dressed, Mr Adams was in a suit (navy-blue double-breasted). "I didn't realise this was a Bank Holiday," he smiled at complaining backs.

Then it was down to serious business. There was the offer of an electoral pact with the SDLP for the coming election. Then there emerged the intriguing possibility of Sinn Fein voters using their options under the single transferable vote system

to vote for David Trimble's Ulster Unionists – provided Mr Trimble opened up a dialogue with Sinn Fein. Both these moves would, of course, further strengthen Sinn Fein's credentials. The response has been cool. The SDLP's John Hume and Seamus Mallon have both said that such pacts among nationalists are part of a divided past. Meanwhile, Mr Trimble maintains that no meaningful talks are possible until the IRA decommissions.

Nevertheless, it is impossible to ignore the fact that Sinn Fein is a central feature of the changes taking place. The reason is simple: this particular agreement has more of a chance of success than previous accords precisely because the IRA, through Sinn Fein, and the main Loyalist paramilitaries, through the Ulster Democratic Party and the Progressive Unionist Party, are involved. However unappealing this may be to some, Mr Adams, Mr McGuinness and Mr Ervine expect to play and will play influential roles in the new assembly.

Sinn Fein should have two ministers in the assembly executive, if the party hangs on to its electoral support. The Unionists do not want this to happen until and unless the IRA disarms. But most observers expect that the British and the Irish governments will achieve a compromise, just as they have done on previous occasions.

Sinn Fein's hierarchy has the sharp suits, but the party's new stylishness has not yet extended to its means of transport. In 1994 Mr Adams and Mr McGuinness arrived at Stormont for talks in a battered black taxi and a geriatric Ford Granada. After the referendum result the *Irish Times* wondered whether Mr Adams would exchange his "clapped-out, dark-windowed" bullet-proof Ford estate for a Mercedes. In fact, we may yet see both him and Mr McGuinness travelling in ministerial Rovers. Far stranger things have happened.

Our parents hoped that they would end up in Brooklyn ...

England was last choice for many West Indians, says Tony Phillips

WHEN Oliver Smith first explained why he came here 44 years ago from St Vincent, he offered a predictable story. He reeled it off almost as I walked through the door of his Coventry home.

"England is the mother country," he declared, "and if England is our mother country, sure enough the best thing to do is to go where your mother is because each mother actually

cares for their children. So, I decided I'd head for England."

Respectable sentiments, in tune with an orthodox propaganda by historians and broadcasters charting the history of black people in Britain. It's the story we have heard most recently of the *Windrush*, whose arrival here 50 years ago is being remembered around the country. Except that I never really believed it. And after three hours' chatting, Oliver let slip the truth.

"I was tempted, of course, to go to America, because of the money," he ventured, clapping his big, carpenter's hands in front of one knee. "A lot of West Indians preferred to go to America at the time, you know, moneywise. That's how myself and many others

looked at it, because you don't get anything that easy here, and they don't treat you as a mother should."

Emboldened by disclosure, he continued: "We used to think this is a very, very great country. But that was all fantasy. It's a country. It's not a mother country any more. Just country. No more mother country."

Oliver had dropped a changer. This didn't go with the plot. He had dared to suggest that other options were on the cards.

His tale is not a one-off. Oliver's cousin was in St Vincent at the time of his departure. Alan had no doubts where his future lay, despite his typically English schooling and upbringing in the West Indies:

"Yeah, we loved it. Mother always taught us to talk proper English, to say 'Good morning' and everything that goes along with it, but what it boils down to is making a good living. We thought America was the place and that's it. The focus was on America."

Today, Alan runs a successful bakery in Brooklyn. His quest for his slice of the American Dream did not come that easily. He was hindered from migrating to the US by the McCarran-Walter Immigration Act of 1952, which drastically cut the number of US visas available in the West Indies.

"They told me that I had to wait my turn from 1952 to 1956 because there's a new quota system now, and you just have to wait until your number

comes up. I never thought of no place else." Meanwhile, Alan's less patient cousin, Oliver, accepted second best and set sail for England.

In truth, the *Windrush* was neither the catalyst nor the symbol for mass migration to Britain, says Professor Mary Chamberlain, of Oxford Brooks University, an expert in the history of West Indian migration. "The real turning-point was America shutting its doors in '52. That was when the real numbers of migrants from the West Indies began to come to Britain."

Indeed, Dr George Irish, of the City University in New York – himself a West Indian – says that West Indians looked unfavourably on Britain: "England was the last choice."

In short, the colonial umbilical cord had long been broken.

All of which leaves an intriguing supposition. If the doors of the United States had remained open to British West Indians throughout the Fifties, then Britain might be a very different country today. The likes of Lenny Henry, Ian Wright, Diane Abbott, Trevor Phillips and myself would very likely have been raised on bread from Alan's Bakery in Brooklyn, rather than on round upon round of medium-sliced Mother's Pride.

'Secrets and Lies: Dissolving the Myths of West Indian Migration', produced by Tony Phillips, can be heard on BBC Radio 4 on 15 June at 8pm.

Mo's snub

THE social snub that Mohamed Al Fayed feels was inflicted upon him by Princess Diana, the mother of Prince Harry, which provoked his vicious attacks on her in Paris on Friday, reflect a pattern of similar affronts which the Egyptian believes he has suffered in Britain.

In the months before the general election, the owner of Harrods was fuming at what he regarded as malignant neglect from the Labour Party. After everything Fayed had done to expose the Tories' cash for questions scandal and to bring down Jonathan Aitken, he was expecting Tony Blair's New Labour to embrace him with loving arms.

Instead he was ignored by the Hamilton-led campaign force, which was under orders to keep the

Egyptian at several football pitches' distance. Once he realised that he was not going to be warmly cuddled in public by Labour, Mr Fayed went straight off the party. Instead he decided the Liberal Democrats offered the best hope for Fayed-style democracy and summoned several of their leaders. When he offered a large campaign donation to the Lib Dems, after careful consideration and to their everlasting credit, the party politely declined. Surprisingly, we have yet to hear Fayed accuse Paddy Ashdown of being a "snob", but Pandora lives in hope.

Dobson's turn

NEW Labour never seems to run short of catchy phrases e.g. "Cool Britannia". Last year Frank Dobson

PANDORA

came over all nautical when he warned that cutting NHS waiting lists would be like "turning around a supertanker". In subsequent months, this phrase has surfaced again and again, mouthed by journalists, economists and even rugby coaches. You might think the time had come to put this phrase in dry dock, but Pandora isn't so sure. With Ann Widdecombe now facing Dobson at the dispatch box, his favourite analogy may have some new life in it yet.

Chelsea's bug

IT'S time for Chelsea Clinton, presumably America's First Daughter, to

undergo that wonderful Stateside *rite de passage* known as "getting your wheels". A White House insider has reportedly leaked news that her parents have bought her a VW Beetle which she will collect when she returns to Washington from her freshman year at Stanford in Palo Alto, California. It's all black and comes with "side airbags" and a superior stereo system at a cost of nearly \$20,000. Could it have occurred to Daddy that the Bug's back seat is far too small for any significant hanky-panky?

Less off

ARE the organisers of National Cinema Day suffering from complacency brought on by last year's success? Last year, Patsy Kensit promoted the event and offered

cinema-goers tickets to any film of their choice for £1. This year, the far less photogenic Peter Howitt, director of *Sliding Doors*, did the honours and offered a mere 25 per cent reduction on tickets.

Uma's ex

UMA THURMAN is an intelligent young woman and, despite playing a morose bimbo in *Pulp Fiction*, she knows how to construct a wicked metaphor. Recently quoted in America's *Mademoiselle* magazine on her first husband, Gary Oldman, she said: "It's in the past and has no relation to the present. It's like a black and white movie. And the subtitles are in a language I don't remember how to speak." Unlike English, which she obviously speaks to devastating effect.

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Sam Aaronovitch

SAM AARONOVITCH was a working-class intellectual. The child of Jewish immigrants in the East End of London, he was part of the enormous contribution by the Jewish community to radical politics in Britain. His youth and the whole of his early manhood was given to the Communist movement – first as a militant, then as a party full-timer; one of his many roles for the party was as election agent for the only two Communists ever elected to the London County Council, in 1945.

In the Sixties, as the limitations of the doctrine embraced in his teens became clear, he invented not just a new career for himself but almost a completely new social and political identity. Although in his party career he had already written several books – on questions of economic policy in particular – he embarked on an academic career as the king of late starters when he was near 50. He once explained his difficulties in filling in applications for university posts. "Education: St George's-in-the-East Secondary, Stepney 1930-34; Balliol College, Oxford 1967-71."

Aaronovitch now launched a career as an unusual but highly successful academic economist, rapidly advancing to become the head of the economics team at South Bank Polytechnic (South Bank University from 1992). A stream of books and articles followed, all bearing on the relations between economics and politics, and with a range of themes which few other academics could match – industrial pricing, insurance, monopoly, the impact of the City on the London economy, macroeconomic policy.

This ability to change and develop was one of his most profound characteristics. Although Sam Aaronovitch always remained loyal to the Communist Party and deeply opposed to the inequities of the capitalist order he could also be, especially in oral debate, a devastating critic of the Marxist left itself. Combining a wealth of experience in industry and the trade union movement with his academic training, he was a formidable

opponent of pious or sentimental orthodoxies and a thorn in the side of those who articulated them.

In the 1970s the British Communist Party probably had access to more economic expertise than any other political party in Britain. Its economic advisory committee brought together militant trade union officials and young intellectuals (almost all of them today in senior academic positions). Aaronovitch's unique experience enabled him to address both groups with authority.

In spite of deepening divisions, the committee made major contributions to economic debate in Britain: the Alternative Economic Strategy it helped to develop, although in the end forestalled by the victory of Mrs Thatcher, was the most serious attempt in decades to reformulate a strategy for the labour movement. Aaronovitch was a key architect of the AES and popularised many of the issues in his book (with several younger authors) on the political economy of British capitalism.

He enjoyed enormously his relations with younger academics and intellectuals. He drew continuously on their insights. In return he would mention their names, secure them invitations to address academic and political groups, write papers with them, find them avenues to publish – for example in the series of books he edited on political economy.

At the same time he maintained his close links with the unions. He was always in demand, and always available, as a speaker at trade union schools and conferences – the combination of industrial and academic viewpoints now led to a unique contribution to the educational side of the labour movement.

In the Eighties, a late flowering of critical and creative analysis enabled Marxists aligned with the "Eurocommunist" current to make a significant contribution to social and political debate. The magazine *Marxism Today*, to which Aaronovitch was a frequent

contributor, endeavoured (in the alarming context of "Thatcherism" – a development of which it provided seminal analyses) to open left-wing debates towards the centre and towards oppositional forces with different allegiances. Again Sam Aaronovitch widened the audience and the debate; his book *The Road from Thatcherism* (1981), brought much of the new questioning to wider audiences.

The bitter internal disputes of the CP, in many ways absurd, were nevertheless an early sign of crises soon to engulf the unions, the whole Left and the socialist project itself. Aaronovitch was one of few of his generation who was able to challenge orthodoxy and tradition and align himself with the – usually much younger – members arguing for a thorough democratisation of methods and goals.

Not many of these young people realised his age. The whole style of the man – his dress, his speech – was youthful. His dedication to physical fitness was amazing; he climbed in the Dolomites and ran half-marathons when he was close to 70.

Sam Aaronovitch's later years exemplified both his capacity to grow and the most fruitful response to the distinction between the Marxist identity: to turn creative energies towards new and better projects for social change – where, although public policy remains crucial, solutions are sought more within civil society than through the state; and where openness of debate and democratic organisation are as important as the goals of oppositional movements.

In 1982, aged over 60, he set up and ran the Local Economic Policy Unit together with its journal, *Local Economy*. Here he displayed capacities for successful enterprise which might have made him a wealthy man if he had not chosen a life in the labour movement. (His business acumen had once been used to secure the USSR good prices for its diamond exports). This activity, involving local political activists as well as academics,

corresponded well to a richer view of social change.

But it was far from exhausting Aaronovitch's involvement in the renewal of policy debates and the reorganisation of the Left. Until the end, even gravely ill – and he fought a long and courageous battle with cancer – he participated in a host of projects and discussions, among trade unionists and academics, in Britain and in Europe. In all these fields he had a wealth of contacts and collaborators: for Aaronovitch the address book (he had several, religiously kept up to date) was the most indispensable tool of working life.

Even at the very end – he was finally compelled to retire from South Bank last year – he was full of projects and initiatives and found himself a base at the LSE from which to pursue them. He chaired a seminar at South Bank some ten days before his death.

Sam Aaronovitch was a convivial companion; on occasion angry, he never failed to be cheerful, witty, encouraging – with enormous sympathy for younger friends and colleagues.

Given the upheavals of his political and professional life, it is not surprising perhaps that his personal life was somewhat unstable. He was married three times (to Bertha, Kirsten and Lavender). The complexity of family life did not detract from the warmth of his relations with his five children. His last 20 years, with Kath Halpenny, brought another phase of widening and development as he engaged deeply for the first time with music and the visual arts, and began to explore, with customary enthusiasm, the architectural inheritance of Europe.

John Grahall

Samuel Aaronovitch, economist: born London 26 December 1919; Executive Committee, Communist Party of Great Britain 1945-67; Principal Lecturer in Economics, South Bank Polytechnic 1971-92; Head of Department 1975-92; Professor of Economics, South Bank University 1992-97; twice married (three sons, two daughters); died London 30 May 1998.



Formidable: Aaronovitch taking part in a marathon, 1987

Photograph: Mike Nicholson

Gottfried Dienst

IT WAS the most controversial goal in football history, yet Gottfried Dienst, the Swiss referee who allowed it to stand, admitted afterwards that he didn't know whether the ball went in or not.

The scene was Wembley, the occasion the 1966 World Cup Final between England and West Germany. Ten minutes into extra-time with the scores level at two-apiece, Alf Ramsey's men were on the attack. Nobby Stiles passed to Alan Ball on the right flank, and the dynamic little redhead cut the ball back to Geoff Hurst, who was about ten yards out from the near post. He collected the ball cleanly, then swivelled and hit a ferocious shot which cannoned against the crossbar and bounced to the ground before being headed clear by Wolfgang Weber.

By then the England players, certain that the ball had crossed the line, embraced ecstatically while the dismayed Germans, equally adamant that it hadn't, protested vehemently to the referee. Dienst, a calm and dignified figure, consulted his Soviet linesman – Tokir Bakhtamov, who died in 1993 – and after an agony of waiting in which the stadium fell unnaturally quiet, he allowed the goal. England went on to win 4-2 when Hurst completed his hat-trick at the end, but it was that dramatic third goal which truly demoralised the weary Germans.

Should it have stood? Roger Hunt, who was closest to the incident, was unequivocal:

"I was about six yards out when the ball hit the turf and I turned instantly to celebrate. I believed at the time that it was over the line and I believe it now [1998]. If there had been the slightest shred of doubt in my mind I would have followed up to make sure."

But Dienst himself, when interviewed in 1989, was honest enough to admit:

"I still don't know if the shot by Hurst in the 100th minute was in or not. I have to say that I was standing in a poor position for that shot, exactly head-on instead of diagonal to the goal. I wouldn't have allowed the goal if the linesman Bakhtamov hadn't pointed to the middle with his flag."

Exhaustive television replays and countless photographs proved inconclusive in settling the argument, though the British soccer historian Philip Evans wrote in 1990:

"We can now say that it probably was not a goal. But to establish that fact, it took a lot of people many hours of very hard work in cinema laboratories all over the world."



Dienst: calm and dignified

Dienst never hid from the issue, revealing that strangers still asked him daily about the decision more than two decades later. "I gladly respond," he said. Actually, of course, it was a goal. Just look in the record books.

Ivan Ponting

Gottfried Dienst, football referee: born c1920; died Basle, Switzerland 1 June 1998.

Dorothy Stickney

JOSHUA Logan, who directed the actress Dorothy Stickney on Broadway, described her in his memoirs as "Meissen-made".

In her nearly 100 years, this petite, blue-eyed blonde won many acting awards, wrote for the theatre, appeared in a dozen films, and enjoyed a 41-year marriage to Howard Lindsay, co-author with Russell Crouse of *Life With Father* – the longest-running non-musical play in Broadway history – the Pulitzer Prize-winning *State of the Union*, and the books of the musicals *Anything Goes*, *Call Me Madam* and *The Sound of Music*.

Despite corneal ulcers in childhood (which plagued her from three to 17 necessitating seven operations), Dorothy Stickney was determined to become an actress. After attending North Western Dramatic School in Minneapolis, she made her stage debut as part of a quartet, although none of the four hailed from the South, they called themselves "The Southern Belles". Their projected

tour was cancelled after a performance in which only one person was in the auditorium.

In 1921 Stickney decided to leave Broadway, and endured three years of frustration and near starvation before being signed to take over a leading role in Owen Davis's play *The Nervous Wreck*. Davis, howev-

er, felt she looked too gaunt and intense for a comedy role and rejected her.

In despair, she turned for advice to Howard Lindsay, a young actor-director whom she knew casually. Gently but firmly, he urged her to give up acting. Instead, she continued to haunt the offices of theatrical



Stickney in *I Never Sang for My Father* (1970) Kobl Collection

agents finally finding work with a summer stock company at Skowhegan, Maine, where she soon established herself as a gifted and versatile actress.

Two seasons later Lindsay was hired as the company's director, and he and Stickney eventually fell in love. Engaged, they returned to New York, where Lindsay took minor acting parts.

After making her Broadway debut in *The Squall* (1926), Stickney scored a great success that same year in the unlikely role of an ancient, crazed scrublady in *Chicago*, the play on which the current Fosse-Kander-Ehh musical is based. "When friends or strangers would mention having seen *Chicago*," Lindsay wrote, "I would chime in, 'My fiancée is in that company. She plays Crazy Liz.' Their minds would go back to the toothless old scrubwoman they had seen in the play and their congratulations would be faint and forced."

They married in 1927, the

year Lindsay's first Broadway play was produced. It had a modest run, but Stickney was soon acting in a play that had an enormous one: Hecht and MacArthur's *The Front Page*, in which she was again cast against type as Mollie Molloy, the bedraggled prostitute. She had similar success in Congreve's *The Way of the World* and Rose Franken's *Another Language* (both 1939).

In 1939 Lindsay and Crouse turned Clarence Day's books of family reminiscence into *Life With Father*, in which Stickney played charming, spirited Mother to Lindsay's stubborn bombastic Father. They acted the roles for five years of the play's seven-year run, playing them again in *Life With Father* (1948) which, like most sequels, was a failure.

In the early 1940s Stickney read *Bodies in Our Cellar*, the work of an unknown playwright. Joseph Kesselring, finding it uneven but promising, she passed it to Lindsay and Crouse, who produced it on Broadway,

rewriting it without credit. As *Arsenic and Old Lace*, it ran for three years.

In 1957 an estimated 107 million people watched Rodgers and Hammerstein's television musical *Cinderella*, with Julie Andrews in the title role, and the Lindsays as King and Queen.

Three years later Stickney appeared on Broadway and in the West End in *A Lovely Light*, her one-woman show based on the poems and letters of Edna St Vincent Millay. In 1973, five years after her husband's death, she appeared on Broadway in the musical *Pippin*, stopping the show nightly with the song "No Time at All".

She had made her screen debut in 1931. She was the killer in *Murder at the Vanities* (1934), Melvyn Douglas's mortally ill wife in *I Never Sang for My Father* (1970) and a bibulous crook in *The Great Diamond Robbery* (1954); to get her hands on a precious stone, she pretends to be the long-lost mother of a young diamond-cutter

(Red Skelton), until she begins to believe her own lie.

Time enthused, "Dorothy Stickney, as a ginned-away shoplifter redeemed by delusions of motherhood, is enormously funny." She was also amusing as the aptly named Miss Bird, a twitting little sanatorium patient in *The Uninvited* (1944).

The sanatorium's head in that film was played by Cornelia Otis Skinner, who wrote in her book *Life With Lindsay and Crouse* (1976): "In 1938 Dorothy opened in *On Borrowed Time*. Howard came to the dress rehearsal and saw his pretty wife dressed and made up as a grandmother in her seventies. When Dorothy returned to the house she found a telegram from Howard saying 'Darling, I can hardly wait!'"

Dick Vosburgh

Dorothy Hayes Stickney, actress: born Dickinson, North Dakota 21 June 1900; married 1927 Howard Lindsay (died 1968); died New York 2 June 1998.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

BIRTHS

ARBUTHNOT: On 31 May, to Emma and James, a daughter, Alice Trupest Wenys, a sister for Alexander, Katherine and Eleanor.

BROADBENT: see ARBUTHNOT.

IN MEMORIAM

SKILBECK: Ralph FW, 21 October 1942-8 June 1998. Remembered with love.

WERNHNER: Lady Theodora Anna Wernher (née Romanov), born 1901 Petrograd, Russia, died Northampton 1974. Innocent victim of evil. Her daughter, Alexandra.

For Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS please telephone to 0171-293 2052 or fax 0171-293 2016.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Queen, Patron, accompanied by The Duke of Edinburgh, attends a concert at the Lyceum Theatre, London WC2, in aid of the Royal National Institute for the Blind. Princess Alexandra attends a Gala Recital and Dinner in aid of the European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer (EORTC) at the British Embassy, Brussels.

Changing of the Guard

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am. F Company Scots Guards mounts the Queen's Guard at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, hand provided by the Welsh Guards.

Birthdays

Mr Colin Baker, actor, 55; Sir William Barlow, former chairman, BICC, 74; The Rev John Barrett, headmaster, The Selsby School, Cambridge, 55; Lord Campbell of Croy, former Government minister, 77; Miss Linda Cierach, dress designer, 46; Mr Michael Codron, theatrical producer, 68; Professor Alice Coleman, geographer, 75; Professor Francis Crick OM, biologist, 82; Earl Ferrers, former government minister, 69; Sir Iain Glidewell, a Lord Justice of Appeal, 74; Miss Gwen Harwood, poet, 78; Mr Ray Illingworth, cricketer and manager, 66; Lord Kirkwood, a Senator of the College of Justice in Scotland, 66; Sir Michael Levey, former director, National Gallery, 71; Lady Lintell, former director-general, IBA, 66; Miss Millicent Martin, actress and singer, 64; Dame Jean Maxwell-Scott, royal equestrian, 75; Sir Ian Morrow, former chairman, MAF, 86; Mr Tony Mottram, tennis player, 78; Mr Don Mountjoy, snooker player, 36; Miss Alison Moyet, rock singer, 37; Mr Roger Murray, former president, Cargill Europe, 62; Lord Onslow of Woking, former MP and government minister, 72; Sir Eric Parker, former company chairman, 65; Sir David Poole, High Court judge, 60; Lord Pritchard, former company chairman, 88; Brigadier Gaele Ramsey, chief executive, BESO, 56; Mr Nick Rhodes, rock keyboard player, 36; Sir Julian Riddale, former MP, 83; Miss Nancy Sinatra, 58; Dr Robert Stevens, Master, Pembroke College, Oxford,

65; Mr Martin Taylor, chief executive, Barclays Bank, 46; Mr John Thompson, former Director of Radio, IBA, 69; Mr Derek Underwood, cricketer, 53; Dame Anne Warburton, former President of the US, 1845; Douglas William Jerrold, playwright and humorist, 1837; Mr Joseph Parton, architect, 1865; George Soud (Amandine-Lucile-Aurore Dupin), writer, 1876; Gerard Manley Hopkins, poet, 1899; William Bliss Carman, poet, 1929; Sir Godfrey Seymour Teale, actor, 1933; Robert Taylor (Spangler Arlington Brugh), actor, 1969; Sir Norman Hartnell, royal dressmaker, 1979; Gordon Jacob, composer, 1984. On this day: the Congress of Vienna ended, 1815; the electric suction vacuum-cleaner was patented, 1869; the first London production of the opera *The Merry Widow* was presented, 1907; during the Italian-Turkish War in Tripoli, the first motor-ambulances were used, when 20 Italian army vehicles went into service, 1912; the second Labour Government, with Ramsey MacDonald as prime minister, took office, 1929; in Romania, King Carol resumed the throne, 1930; James Earl Ray was arrested in London and charged with the murder of Martin Luther King, 1968. Today is the Feast Day of St Cloud of Metz, St Maximinus of Aix, St Medard and St William of York or Thwyrt.

Anniversaries

Births: Giovanni Domenico Cassini, astronomer, 1625; William Dampier, buccannier and navigator, baptised, 1625; John Smeaton, civil engineer, 1724; Robert Stevenson, civil engineer, 1772; Robert Alexander Schumann, composer, 1810; Charles Reade, novelist, 1814; Sir Samuel White Baker, explorer, 1821; Sir John Everett Millais, pre-Raphaelite painter, 1829; George Mursell Garrett, organist and composer, 1834; Frank Lloyd Wright, architect, 1869; Ernest Beaumont Schoedsack, film director and producer, 1893; George (Georg Johann Carl) Anthoni, composer, 1900; Robert Preston (Robert Preston Meservy), actor, 1918; Aleksis Smith (Gladys Smith), stage and film actress, 1921. **Deaths:** The Prophet Mohammed, 632; Hardizemute, King of Denmark and England, 1042; Edward, the Black Prince, 1376; Bishop Richard Scrope, executed, 1405; Lodovico Cardi da Cigoli, painter and architect, 1613; Christiaan Huygens, physicist, astronomer and mathematician, 1695; Sophia, Electress of Hanover, mother of George I of England, 1714; Johann

Joachim Winckelmann, historian and archaeologist, 1768; Thomas Paine, radical author, 1809; Mrs Sarah Siddons (Sarah Kemble), actress, 1831; Andrew Jackson, Seventh President of the US, 1845; Douglas William Jerrold, playwright and humorist, 1837; Mr Joseph Parton, architect, 1865; George Soud (Amandine-Lucile-Aurore Dupin), writer, 1876; Gerard Manley Hopkins, poet, 1899; William Bliss Carman, poet, 1929; Sir Godfrey Seymour Teale, actor, 1933; Robert Taylor (Spangler Arlington Brugh), actor, 1969; Sir Norman Hartnell, royal dressmaker, 1979; Gordon Jacob, composer, 1984. On this day: the Congress of Vienna ended, 1815; the electric suction vacuum-cleaner was patented, 1869; the first London production of the opera *The Merry Widow* was presented, 1907; during the Italian-Turkish War in Tripoli, the first motor-ambulances were used, when 20 Italian army vehicles went into service, 1912; the second Labour Government, with Ramsey MacDonald as prime minister, took office, 1929; in Romania, King Carol resumed the throne, 1930; James Earl Ray was arrested in London and charged with the murder of Martin Luther King, 1968. Today is the Feast Day of St Cloud of Metz, St Maximinus of Aix, St Medard and St William of York or Thwyrt.

Lectures

Wallace Collection: Patricia Falkner, "Dutch Paintings in the Wallace Collection", 1pm.

CASE SUMMARIES: 8 JUNE 1998

The following notes of judgments were prepared by the reporters of the *All England Law Reports*.

Customs duty

Commissioners of Customs and Excise v Hatched Poultry Ltd CA (Thorpe, Mantell LJ) 5 May 1998.

In order for importers to recover import duty by reason of art 220(2)(b) of Council Regulation EC 2913/92 where the Commissioners of Customs and Excise had indicated erroneously that no additional duty was due, it was necessary to show not whether the importer or his agent had acted reasonably in not taking steps which would have brought the error to light, but whether steps were available to bring it to light. That could be achieved in a case where there was no complexity, by referring to the *Official Journal of the European Community*.

Rosell Downey (Chide & Co) for the ap-

pellants; Paul Giverni (Solicitor, C&E) for the Commissioners.

Costs

Haselden v P&O Properties Ltd; CA (Thorpe, Mantell LJ) 5 May 1998.

Where a plaintiff who was a litigant in person decided to invoke the arbitration procedure in the county court in order to avoid the risk of incurring liability for defendants' costs, but due to court error the matter went for trial, legally represented defendants had some obligation to draw to the attention of the plaintiff the beneficial consequences which the defendants intended to harvest from that error. Furthermore, were the plaintiff's claim to fail, the judge had to take into account such an omission by the defendants when deciding whether to award costs on scale 1 or whether the plaintiff's liability to the defendants should be limited to such costs as would

have been recoverable had there been a determination by an arbitrator.

Frances Collico Marres (G L Hockfield & Co) for the plaintiff; *Richard Viney* (Lawrence Graham) for the defendants.

Magistrates' courts

Russey v Chief Constable of the Suffolk Constabulary QBD (Div Ct) (Schiemann LJ, Brian Smedley J) 5 May 1998.

On an appeal against sentence to the Crown Court, the court had power to determine the appeal on a factual basis which differed from that adopted by the court below, since a Crown Court was not bound by any finding of fact made by the magistrates' court such as might limit Crown Court's powers of sentence. If, however, the Crown Court decided not to accept the express view of the magistrates' court, it had to make clear to the appellant that it was doing so and provide an opportunity within

the *Newton* principle for him to challenge its view of the facts.

Hugh Vass (Oakers, Newmarket) for the appellant; *Caroline Bryant* (CPS) for the Crown.

Public order

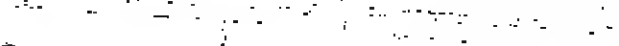
Nelder and ors v DPP; QBD (Div Ct) (Simon Brown LJ, Hooper J) 3 June 1998.

An information which alleged a trespass on land by hunt protesters and which stated that they had intended to deter, disrupt or obstruct that activity contrary to s 68(1) of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 was not bad for duplicity since deterring, disrupting and obstructing were overlapping concepts. There was, accordingly, no need to charge each element separately.

Sharon Holloway (Biddman & Partners) for the first four appellants and (Leeds Prior, Norwich) for the remaining appellants; *Michael Ellis* (CPS) for the Crown.

هكذا من الأصل

Others with year's profits this week include **Electrocomponents**, expected to report year's profits of £120m (£112.6m); **Meyer International** £54m (£44m) and **Johnson Matthey** £123m (£108.3m).



www.schiffberg.com/uk



U-turn on approvals for gas-fired power stations

By Michael Harrison

THE GOVERNMENT is set to block the construction of gas-fired power stations which already have planning consent when it unveils its long-awaited deal to rescue the coal industry this week.

The move is likely to infuriate power companies, the electricity regulator and some of its own MPs. But the President of the Board of Trade, Margaret Beckett, will justify it on the grounds of

Britain's need for a balanced energy policy.

The coal rescue package, expected to be announced on Thursday, will include a three to five-year moratorium on new gas-fired capacity, commitments by the three big generators, National Power, PowerGen and Eastern, to buy more British coal, and measures to make existing coal stations more environmentally friendly. The package will not include proposals to force the generators to divest a proportion

of their coal-fired capacity, although this is likely to be an option kept under review.

Ministers imposed a moratorium on consent for any further gas-fired stations last Christmas and it had been widely expected that this would be extended for a three to five-year period. However, there are a number of gas-fired stations which have received section 36 planning consent and are waiting to go ahead. The Government is expected to refuse some of these stations what is

known as section 14 consent - which allows them to burn gas - thus preventing construction from proceeding.

The rescue plan is designed to provide a power generation market for at least 25 million tonnes of coal a year. This will prevent the almost complete demise of the British mining industry but it will not stop a further round of pit closures involving up to five collieries and perhaps 3,000 jobs.

The current long-term contracts

between RJB Mining, Britain's biggest coal producer, and the generators were extended for a three-month period from April to secure a temporary lifeline for the pits. But new arrangements need to be put in place by the end of this month.

Gas-fired power generators, led by Enron of the US, have warned the Government that blocking further gas-fired stations could add £1bn a year to electricity bills and jeopardise thousands of jobs in the upstream gas industry and construction.

The electricity regulator, Professor Stephen Littlechild, has also urged the Government not to extend the moratorium, arguing that it will stunt competition in the generating market. The Commons Trade and Industry Select Committee, which is chaired by the Labour backbencher Martin O'Neill, will also criticise the move in a report to be published this week.

But ministers are fearful that unless the "dash for gas" is halted then Britain could be dependent on gas

for up to 80 per cent of its electricity generation by 2020.

"It is accepted within government that leaving the existing consent policy as it is will not help solve any of the problems," said one Whitehall source. "But the package that is being announced will still be consistent with the Government's general industrial policy which is pro-competition."

The aim of the moratorium will be to give coal a level playing field to prove itself as a competitive fuel

Brown faces spiralling pay threat

Barrie Clement and Diane Coyle

THERE will be strong upward pressures on pay in the pipeline during the coming months in the wake of a jump in headline inflation to 4 per cent, according to analysts out today.

The news comes after the controversial decision last week by the Bank of England to increase interest rates in order to keep the lid on inflation. Paradoxically, the prospect of higher mortgage rates could be used by employees' representatives to argue for bigger wage rises.

However, in his Mansion House speech this week, Gordon Brown will reaffirm the 2.5 per cent inflation target and emphasise the need for employers and employees to show wage restraint. The Treasury last week reacted positively to the shock interest rate move by the Bank of England, saying it reinforced the Chancellor's message on pay.

The Chancellor will emphasise, too, the Government's commitment to tough control of the public finances. Despite growing political pressures for additional cash ahead of next month's comprehensive spending review, he will not soften his Iron Chancellor image.

In its latest report on recent pay deals, Incomes Data Services points out that most wage settlements are now clustered around the 3 to 4 per cent range, with one in five above 4.5 per cent. One of the highest-profile settlements was a 5.25 per cent deal for Marks & Spencer staff.

Its IDS Report warns that expectations will be fuelled by the latest figure for the Retail Price Index, which was published after most of the reported deals were struck.

Researchers found that the overall spread of pay increases in recent months has ranged from pay freezes to 9 per cent in some companies.

Unrelenting pressure on pay continues among information technology staff where "loyalty" bonuses can be worth up to 50 per cent of salary. A combination of skill shortages, preparations for Economic and Monetary Union and computer problems as-

sociated with the millennium, are reinforcing the upward spiral in pay.

Competition for skilled IT staff is particularly fierce in central Scotland, especially Edinburgh, and along the M4 corridor in towns such as Swindon and Reading. Average turnover of computer personnel is around 15 to 17 per cent a year, according to the report.

Elsewhere, some of the higher pay rises have involved an element of compensation for the abolition of tax-free profit-related pay schemes, which have been wound down as tax relief comes to an end.

At Nycomed Amersham, formerly Amersham International, employees received a 4 per cent rise, plus an average 1 per cent merit increase, together with an additional 2.7 per cent because of the abolition of the company's PRP scheme.

The phasing out of tax relief will continue over the next 18 months, continuing to exert upwards pressure on settlements.

The IDS report says that private sector pay reviews have shown increases running at much the same level in the first and second quarters of the year, with some marginal shift downwards in the second quarter. Inflationary pressures, however, could mean a gradual shift upwards in settlements over the next few months.

The financial markets are anxiously awaiting the latest official figures on average earnings, due next week. Any further pick-up would be seen as raising the spectre of more increases in the cost of borrowing.

The Bank of England also said, in last month's Inflation Report, that it would assess the likely inflationary impact of the introduction of the national minimum wage. Its preliminary estimates suggest a £3.60 minimum wage covering all employees could add around 1 per cent to the total wage bill.

A separate report last week from the Institute for Fiscal Studies suggested the combination of a £3.60 rate for over-20s along with a £3.20 rate for 18 to 20-year-olds would cost employers about £2.5bn. But these calculations assume better-paid employees do not succeed in maintaining differentials.



Gordon Brown: The 'Iron Chancellor' will reaffirm his 2.5 per cent inflation target, but soaring pay deals could knock his policy off course

Treasury MPs to meet Greenspan

Diane Coyle
Economics Editor

MEMBERS of the influential Treasury Committee responsible for monitoring the Bank of England are to visit Washington this week in order to meet Alan Greenspan, chairman of the US Federal Reserve and the most powerful central banker in the world.

The trip, led by committee chairman Giles Radice, comes just ahead of confirmation hearings at Westminster for the nine members of the Monetary Policy Committee. The MPC's surprise decision to increase interest rates last week is likely to mean the MPs on the Treasury Committee will give the Bank's experts a particularly thorough grilling.

The US trip will also include a visit to Congress for the British politicians to learn how their American counterparts conduct confirmation hearings for members of the Federal Reserve Board and scrutinise the Fed's decisions.

But just as important will be the

chance to hear Mr Greenspan's views about prospects for the US economy and interest rates. The Fed chairman's towering reputation stems from the fact that for more than six years he has achieved the ideal combination of falling unemployment and low inflation - both the lowest for decades - with minimal touches on the interest rate tiller.

The Bank of England gained its formal independence, and the MPC got up to full strength, just last week. The arrival of the ninth member, John Vickers, an Oxford economist specialising in regulatory policy, is widely assumed to have helped tip the balance in favour of the rise in the cost of borrowing announced on Thursday.

Although next week's sessions could well be stormy, the Treasury Committee is not expected to try to overturn any of the nine appointments. However, the MPs refuse to rule out the possibility of blocking nominations for the MPC in future, when they will be able to hold more timely confirmation hearings.

Spending review backs investment

THE THREE-YEAR spending plans to be set out in the Government's comprehensive spending review early next month will give top priority to additional investment in hospitals, schools and transport, writes Diane Coyle.

In future departments will not be allowed to switch money from investment to their day-to-day spending on items like pay and running costs.

A Treasury source said: "Our systems of control of public spending have resulted in biases against capital spending. There is a problem and we want to do something about it."

However, the new rules will make it harder for departments to go ahead with additional projects under the Private Finance Initiative. The reason is that the stream of payments to private sector partners they would have to make under new PFI leases fall into the category of current rather than capital spending.

A paper to be published by the Treasury today shows that government investment in the UK is lower, rela-

tive to the size of the economy, than in any other leading industrial nation, including the US. It has also fallen sharply since 1980 to just over 1.5 per cent of GDP as departments have cut their investment as the easiest option in implementing tough spending plans.

In a speech last week Gordon Brown announced that there would be a surplus of tax revenues over current, day-to-day spending in each of the next three years. This would guarantee that the public finances met the so-called "golden rule" that the government should only borrow to finance investment.

Treasury officials indicated that this explained the move to publish separate departmental limits for investment and current spending in next month's review. No department will be allowed to meet its current spending target by cutting back on investment spending.

The decision implies that any extra resources available will be channelled first into investment in the nation's infrastructure of hospital and school buildings and equipment.

Mirror Group in talks on rival offer

By John Willcock

MIRROR GROUP said yesterday that the "phone had been ringing off the hook" with alternative proposals to Axel Springer's expected bid, as it emerged that the British newspaper group had spoken to at least two private equity funds about a counter-offer.

"The longer the Springer camp delays in making its offer, the more exciting things come along for our shareholders to look at," a spokesman for Mirror Group said yesterday.

Price continued to be central to the poker game for control of the group, following Axel Springer's declaration of intent to launch a bid on 22 May. Sources close to Mirror Group insist that around 300p per share would be a minimum, valuing the company at around £1.4bn.

The Axel Springer side dismissed this as way too high, pointing to the market's valuation of the shares, which closed on Friday at 232p. Before the German publishing house announced its interest in launching a bid, Mirror Group's shares stood at around 180p, "so there is already a 50p bid premium built into the price," one source said yesterday.

Support for the position of Mirror Group boss David Montgomery came from one institutional shareholder, PDM, which holds 18.1 per cent of the group. It indicated it would be unlikely to sell out of Mirror Group at anything like current levels.

Meanwhile, the Montgomery camp is confident that the longer Axel Springer waits to table its bid the longer the Mirror Group management has to find a "white knight".

The US fund manager Warburg Pincus and venture capital group Cinven are both understood to have had contact with Mr Montgomery.

Cinven bought IPC, the magazine group, at the beginning of the year, and Mirror Group is understood to have suggested a joint venture, to no avail. Warburg Pincus owns a chunk of Aegis, the media-buying group, and was also once a shareholder in London Weekend Television before the latter sold out to Granada in 1993.

There are also suggestions that the Mirror management may be keen on finding an alternative to Axel Springer because it fears that the Germans may impose a rigid, centrally controlled management structure alien to the free-wheeling ways of British tabloids.

Fund managers prefer the euro to the dollar

By John Willcock

THE EURO gets a massive thumbs-up from a survey of European fund managers published today, with nearly two-thirds preferring the fledgling currency over the US dollar as an investment medium.

Continental investors are

also becoming more optimistic about domestic equities and remain sceptical of prospects in the Pacific Basin and Eastern Europe, according to June's Merrill Lynch Gallup survey of European fund managers.

Of the 67 fund managers interviewed this month, 61 per cent said they favour the euro over

the next 12 months, with only 28 per cent picking the US dollar as their preferred currency. This represents a reversal of the position last year, before the final decision to go ahead with the single currency had been taken.

According to Bryan Allworthy, European equity strategist at Merrill Lynch in

London, "Investor enthusiasm for the euro is based on expectations of significantly more restrictive monetary policy in the euro-zone."

"The widespread perception is that the European Central Bank will operate a tighter-than-necessary policy to gain credibility in the financial mar-

kets as quickly as possible," Mr Allworthy said.

So far the euro appears not to suffer a lack of credibility among investors. According to the Merrill Lynch survey the number of respondents expecting the euro to be "hard" has doubled to 70 per cent over the past two months.

Optimism about the prospects for Europe's currency is spilling over into investors' stock market preferences, says Merrill Lynch. The June survey sees a net balance of 49 per cent favouring continental European equities on a three-month view, up from 39 per cent last month, while 66 per cent favour

the home markets on a 12-month view.

"Asian flu", on the other hand, has produced the month's biggest loser. On a three-month view, a balance of 51 per cent of fund managers are bearish about Asia's stock markets, even more than the 45 per cent recorded last month.

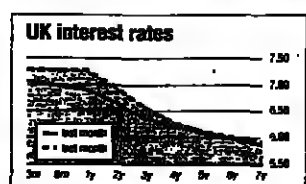
A week in the markets

STOCK MARKETS



Indices	Close	Wk's chg	Wk's chg%	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield(%)
FTSE 100	5947.30	78.60	1.31	6150.5	4382.8	3.926
FTSE 250	5934.60	33.20	0.56	6034.5	4384.2	3.051
FTSE 100	2867.70	33.20	1.16	2938.7	2141.8	3.783
FTSE All Share	2832.80	30.62	1.09	2881.12	2106.58	3.704
FTSE SmallCap	2775.40	2.30	0.08	2793.8	2182.1	2.961
FTSE 100/100	1508.10	2.70	0.18	1511	1225.2	2.99
FTSE AIM	1144.80	11.10	0.99	1139.4	865.9	1.079
FTSE EBL100	1055.84					
Dow Jones	9037.71	137.76	1.55	9261.91	6971.32	1.574
Nikkei	15322.43	347.36	2.22	20510.79	14488.21	0.986
Hong Kong	8569.47	338.08	4.09	16820.31	7909.13	4.818
Dax	5888.50	118.42	2.14	5664.84	3487.24	2.794

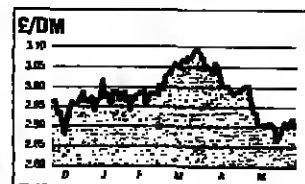
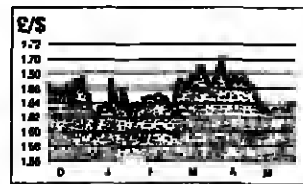
INTEREST RATES



Money Market Rates					Bond Yields				
	3 month	1 yr	1 yr	1 yr	1 yr	1 yr	1 yr	1 yr	1 yr
UK	7.69	1.00	7.69	0.63	6.76	-1.36	5.51	-1.67	
US	5.69	-0.13	5.86	-0.34	5.58	-1.03	5.79	-1.09	
Japan	0.55	-0.05	0.55	-0.37	1.46	-1.99	1.46	-1.32	
Germany	3.56	0.41	3.88	0.55	4.85	-0.96	5.41	-1.21	

MAIN PRICE CHANGES							
Rises	Price bid	Wk's chg	% chg	Falls	Price bid	Wk's chg	% chg
Vaux Group	345.00	54.50	18.76	Sheba	1340.00-195.00	-12.70	
Refrack Group	1395.00	205.00	17.23	Business Post	800.00	-97.50	-10.88
JB Sports	607.50	88.00	16.94	Palmtron	132.50	-15.50	-10.47
Veolia	716.50	82.50	12.26	Glenmed	283.50	-22.50	-10.26
Independent Incur	382.50	41.00	12.01	Galen Holdings	436.50	-50.00	-10.28

CURRENCIES



Pound						Dollar					
Index	Price	Wk's chg	Wk's chg%	1 yr	1 yr	Index	Price	Wk's chg	Wk's chg%	1 yr	1 yr
Brent Oil (\$)	13.80	-0.32	-2.32	17.82	17.82	Gold (\$)	291.65	-1.30	-0.45	343.35	343.35
Gold (\$)	291.65	-1.30	-0.45	343.35	343.35	Silver (\$)	5.23	0.27	5.35	4.73	4.73
Silver (\$)	5.23	0.27	5.35	4.73	4.73	Base Rates	7.50			6.25	6.25

TOURIST RATES

Australia (\$)	2.6066	Malta (lira)	0.6148
Austria (schillings)	19.71	Mexican (nuevo peso)	13.09
Belgium (francs)	57.89	Netherlands (guilders)	3.1604
Canada (\$)	2.3181	New Zealand (\$)	3.0297
Cyprus (pounds)	0.8220	Norway (krone)	11.86
Denmark (krone)	10.75	Portugal (escudos)	284.93
Finland (markka)	8.5778	Saudi Arabia (rials)	5.9565
France (francs)	9.4114	Spain (pesetas)	2.6370
Germany (marks)	2.8185	South Africa (rand)	8.0520
Greece (drachmas)	475.12	Sweden (krona)	12.39
Hong Kong (\$)	12.28	Switzerland (francs)	2.3410
Ireland (pounds)	1.1101	Thailand (bahts)	83.31
India (rupees)	62.77	Turkey (liras)	405530
Israel (shekels)	5.5185	USA (\$)	1.5864
Italy (lira)	2775		
Japan (yen)	223.27		
Malaysia (ringgits)	6.1905		

Rates for indication purposes only
Source: Thomas Cook

ملكا من الاصل



GAVYN DAVIES ON THE THINGS THAT MAKE LIFE DIFFICULT FOR THE MONETARY POLICY COMMITTEE

The Bank strives to become an invisible referee

MERVYN KING, the Deputy Governor of the Bank of England, has often remarked that a successful central bank should be boring and predictable, rather like "a referee whose success is judged by how little his decisions intrude into the game itself". By this reckoning, the Monetary Policy Committee still has some work to do.

The behaviour of the MPC in recent months has been anything but predictable. The February edition of the Bank's "Inflation Report" was undoubtedly pessimistic, yet base rates were left on hold. Fast forward three months, and we find that base rates are increased - this time, on the immediate heels of a May "Inflation Report" which is decidedly less pessimistic than its predecessor.

Meanwhile, an erudite debate is allowed in take place about whether the Bank should focus on an inflation target alone, or whether it should also be concerned about smoothing the path for output. This debate, which has apparently been encouraged by people inside the MPC itself, is guaranteed to dim the public's understanding of what the new monetary system is really all about.

Hence, it is less of a surprise than it ought to be when the director general of the Institute of Exporters describes the MPC as "composed of economists, bankers and academics living in a kind of wonderland where facts and reality are not allowed to intrude". Once the Bank, with only one instrument at its disposal, allows itself to be held to account for hitting several different objectives - growth, employment, a competitive currency and low inflation - then trouble will quickly follow.

Given time, the new system will no doubt bed down successfully. First, though,

the current collection of nine intelligent but disparate individuals on the MPC will need to mould themselves into a corporate entity with a unified culture.

One reason why the Treasury's group of Wise Persons failed under the last government was that the various members never saw it as in their individual interest to further the reputation of the group as a whole. Luckily, though, the Wise Persons never had anything important to do. The MPC has something very important to do, and they must not fall for the same trap.

As Ed Balls, the Chancellor's Economic Adviser, explained in this column last week, full transparency of the decision-making process is an integral part of the new monetary system, and he hinted that further thought might be given to eliminating the six-week gap between MPC meetings and the publication of the relevant minutes. Initially, this gap was designed to allow a breathing space for a rethink on policy, with remedial action being possible before the markets realised that a problem had arisen in the first place. This

is indeed a useful safety valve, but there is a price to be paid in terms of public confusion about the coherence of the MPC as a decision-making body.

For example, take the pattern of current events. Last Thursday, the MPC voted by an unknown majority to raise interest rates. This Wednesday, the minutes of the May MPC meeting will be published, and will probably reveal that the doves were in a clear ascendancy at that time, with several of the erstwhile hawks temporarily voting for rates to be left unchanged. We will then have to wait for another five weeks before the minutes of the June meeting are published, explaining why this group of switchers decided to move back into the hawks camp.

No doubt it was the recent behaviour of sterling and average earnings which explained the hawks' change of view. But it is clear that this rather odd, out-of-sequence reporting of the MPC's behaviour will add to accusations of incoherent decision making. These accusations are anyway rife, since City economists encouraged each other to believe that in-

terest rates had peaked prior to the June meeting. When they discovered they were wrong, they preferred to complain about a lack of credibility in the monetary system, rather than ask themselves why they had misread the situation.

The delay in the publication of the minutes also has the effect of requiring MPC members to live in a permanent twilight zone, where they are allowed to talk in public about what they believed six weeks ago but, on pain of death, must not breathe a word of what they believe today. This is a nightmare for those who are hauled before the Treasury Select Committee to account for views which they may no longer hold.

It also invites public scrutiny of the MPC to focus on trivia - such as whether one individual or another might be thinking of switching sides - instead of concentrating on the substance of monetary policy. This may be good for gossip columnists, and for the growing professional body of MPC-watchers in the City, but it is hard to think of any other industry which benefits from the existence of the twilight zone. Surely it would be better to announce immediately the full details of the vote at each MPC meeting, with the minutes being published as soon as practicable thereafter.

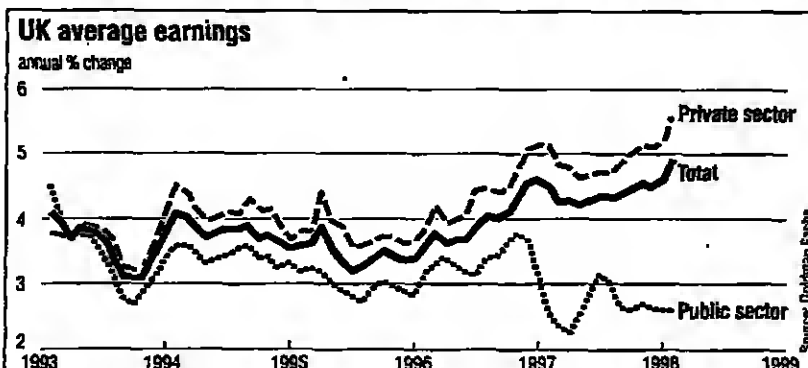
None of this really matters for the long-term reputation of the MPC, at least when compared to the crucial debate on monetary policy itself. This has increasingly been presented not as a debate about the underlying behaviour of the economy, or even as an argument between hawks and doves, but as a conflict between "activists" and "passivists" (not pacifists).

The former group, who happen to be

hawks at the present time, are willing to adjust interest rates relatively rapidly, even if this means that decisions may need to be reversed quite frequently. The passivists, who happen mainly to be career central bankers and are currently doves, argue that there must be an overwhelming "preponderance of evidence" before rates can move, since rapid reversals of policy will damage the credibility of the MPC.

If that is indeed all there is between the two sides - a scholarly debate among colleagues about the timing of a quarter-point move in base rates - then the MPC will have little trouble in presenting a united front in future. But it strains credulity to believe it. There are two extremely strong forces operating on the economy at present. The buoyancy of domestic demand is leading to significant upward pressure on private sector pay deals (only a small part of which is due to bonus payments), as the chart shows, suggesting that monetary policy has been too loose for much too long. On the other hand, the complete collapse in several Asian economies - possibly now including Japan - is leading to strong global deflationary forces from which the UK is certainly not immune.

Which of these two forces will win out? My own bet is that the strength of domestic demand is the greater concern, in which case the hawks will be proved right - and not just about the timing of a quarter-point move here or there, but about the basic thrust of policy for the last couple of years. Base rates should have been raised earlier and much more rapidly, especially in 1997 and early 1998. If this had been done, they might have been dropping now.



Intel set to face monopoly charge

THE US Federal Trade Commission is expected to vote today to charge the world's biggest computer chip maker, Intel, with abusing its monopoly power by threatening to withhold product data from customers who refuse to share information about their own patents.

The commission's four members - a fifth slot is empty - will vote at a meeting today on a staff recommendation to charge that Intel abused market power by forcing other

companies to surrender their trade secrets. Intel, based in Santa Clara, California, makes the microprocessors that run four out of five personal computers.

Both the company and the FTC were refusing to comment at the weekend.

Intel is one of two dominant companies selling to personal computer manufacturers. The other is Microsoft, which has just been charged separately by the Justice Department.

In preparing its Intel case,

the FTC officials have looked at the company's relationship with an Alabama computer maker, Intergraph, and its sometimes convoluted relations with Digital Equipment Corp, Compaq, Acer Computer and Packard Bell, according to industry sources.

The commission said earlier this year that Intel holds monopoly power. This in itself would not be against the law unless, as the FTC is expected to contend, Intel abused its market power.

The case would be a first step against Intel while an investigation continues. Later, the FTC will try to expand the charges, according to sources in the government and industry.

The FTC staff recommendation alleges that Intel uses its near-monopoly in the microprocessor market to extract valuable patent information from chipmakers and computer makers on favourable terms, said insiders familiar with the case.

Intel has argued it has a right

to stop giving advance proprietary information to customers on its latest products if they refuse to share their intellectual property in return.

But Intel was unable to convince a federal judge in Alabama, who granted Intergraph a preliminary injunction against Intel in April. The judge ruled Intel must give the company information and enabling technology on the same basis it shared with others. Intel has appealed against that ruling.

Fortis buys Generale to create £25bn giant after ABN bid fails

FORTIS, a Belgian bank and insurer, won the bidding war against giant Dutch rival ABN Amro for Generale de Banque in Europe's biggest financial services takeover this year.

Fortis will pay 28.675 Belgian francs (£480) a share in a mix of cash, shares and guarantees, valuing Belgium's biggest bank at £8.7bn. Its aim is to compete effectively in the unified Europe-wide capital market that will come into be-

ing when 11 countries adopt the single currency next year.

ABN Amro, the largest Dutch bank, dropped out after Generale de Banque declared its bid "hostile" and sold new shares equal to 10 per cent of its capital to Fortis. The manoeuvre lifted Fortis's stake in the bank to 41.2 per cent, putting it within striking distance of a majority.

"Fortis is pleased that as a result of Generale de Banque's

support for its project, ABN Amro has withdrawn its bid," the bank said. Success would have made ABN Amro Europe's third biggest bank.

The new company will have a combined market value of about £25bn, ranking it 15th in the European league table.

Generale de Banque's shares have gained 31 per cent since Fortis made the first bid last month, and 72 per cent since the beginning of this year.

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The otter makes an urban comeback

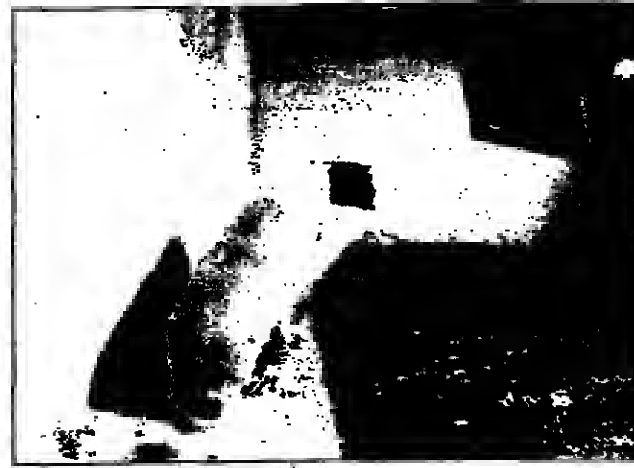


The otter's population recovery has speeded up dramatically in the past five years

Photograph: John Lawrence



An otter, right, caught on video by the river Itchen in the centre of Winchester (left)



Photograph: Jeff du Fau/Planet Earth

IT IS nine minutes past two, to be precise, on an August night and Winchester, a thriving historic city and busy commuter centre, is fast asleep.

One individual in the city centre, however, is very much awake, intent on getting somewhere, and in an old watermill spanning the River Itchen which flows through the city. The individual is suddenly caught by infra-red light and a video camera: a wild otter.

This grainy still is dramatic proof of just how substantial is the otter's comeback. An animal that was extinct in most of England and much of Britain 30 years ago is steadily returning to its former haunts, and swimming right through the middle of conurbations to do so.

Otters have been spotted or traced swimming through Stoke-on-Trent, Reading, Exeter, Glasgow and other urban centres besides Winchester and are present on 28 rivers which flow through towns and cities, according to the most comprehensive account of otter distribution to date, published today by the Wildlife Trusts.

The report, *Splash Back*, shows that because of improvements in water quality and efforts to restore waterside habitats, the otter's gradual recovery has sped up in the past five years. The animals are now recolonising many areas from which they so dramatically disappeared in the late 1950s and 1960s.

The report says otters are at their most numerous in Devon, which has always been their English stronghold. In Scot-

land and in parts of Wales, but they are coming back strongly in East Anglia and in Northumbria - they have been seen three miles from Newcastle upon Tyne. They are spreading from Wales into the Severn and Trent catchment areas and can be found on the edge of Birmingham. Populations are recovering in Wiltshire, Somerset and Hampshire, but Surrey and Kent are largely still awaiting their return.



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But the report also sounds a warning that otters face new and potentially deadly threats, in the form of pollution, habitat loss and road traffic.

Of particular concern is a family of chemicals used in sheep dips, synthetic pyrethroids (SPs). SPs wipe out aquatic life at the base of the food chain, de-

priving fish of insect food and leaving otters short of prey: one teaspoon of SP dip can, the report says, could kill the insects in an area the size of an Olympic swimming pool. The Wildlife Trusts are calling for SPs to be withdrawn from sale pending further research.

Loss of habitat is a continuing problem, but death on the roads is also a big threat to otters. Recent research has shown that road traffic kills 60 per cent of the otters that die violently in the UK, so the trusts are calling for measures such as other underpasses and fencing to become mandatory on all new road, river engineering and rail projects.

"Many animals are very careful about entering a dark tunnel," said Tim Sykes, the Environment Agency conservationist for Hampshire who is in charge of the otter monitoring at the Winchester mill. "Sometimes they jump out and walk along the bank. It's a classic problem elsewhere in the country with roads. Otters don't like swimming through a culvert under a road. They would rather walk up the bank and over it. That's when they get killed by traffic."

The otter pictured scurrying through the Winchester mill had just swum along an open section of the river past footpaths, pubs, private gardens and major roads, until its movement activated the camera. "Maybe they're not as shy as we used to think," Mr Sykes said. "They're just extremely elusive."

But his study of otters on the Itchen is using something much more ambitious than random photography: DNA fingerprinting of individual otters. Volunteers pick up the otter droppings, or spraints, early in the morning while they are still fresh, and they are sent to the University of Aberdeen.

It is the first such project of its type in the world, Mr Sykes said. "Till recently we had to rely on their tracks and signs as clues to their expanding distribution," he said. "Using DNA analysis is like moving from the Wright brothers to Neil Armstrong. We should be able to build up a detailed picture of the otter population."

'Splash Back: The Return of the Otter' is published by the Wildlife Trusts, The Green, Wilham Park, Lincoln LN5 7JR.

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ACROSS
1 Caught girl hiding fine piece of jewellery (6)
5 Tart's a little sweet (4,4)
9 Used flash cards (6,4)
10 Bohemian group's peniless (4)
11 Mind about ills afflicting city (8)
12 Affair leading to discharge (6)
13 Praise ruler in speech (4)
15 Scientist's articles in German carry weight (8)
18 Study to check trouble with joint (8)
19 Port in Trinidad envoy visited (4)
21 Run in last thread (6)
23 Ring before calling and discover oversight (8)
25 Sounds like brilliant (4)

DOWN
2 Hard foreign currency going on first-rate animal (5)
3 Understand trainee's keenness to get information (9)
4 Rex's about to ruin salad vegetable (6)
5 After all more was written about novel (1,8,2,4)
6 Popular batting order (2,6)
7 Recruitment plan (5)
8 Processing here is not going up (2,3,4)
14 More or less go along with change of policy (5,4)
16 Trust man to sort out English convert (9)
17 Country view with river he painted (8)
20 Sound wave (6)
22 Shining silver and blue (5)
24 United finished in the lead (3-2)

contest (4)
26 Sent partner due to mix up (10)
27 Lady was about to enter without warning (8)
28 No longer drain most of it free (6)

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